This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

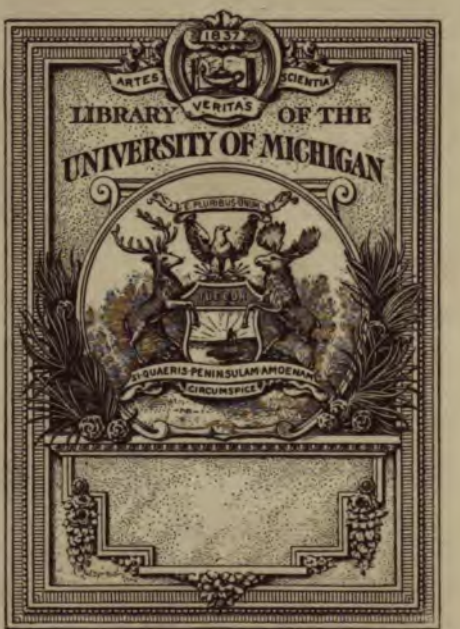
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A 3 9015 00387 170 7
University of Michigan – BUHR


1837
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

AP
4
.N29

ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

AP
4
.N29

THE

NATIONAL REVIEW.

VOL. II.

JANUARY AND APRIL 1856.

LONDON:
ROBERT THEOBALD, 26 PATERNOSTER ROW.
MDCCCLVI.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLYN,

Great New Street and Fetter Lane.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

CONTENTS OF NO. III.—JAN. 1856.

PAGE

ART. I.—EDWARD GIBBON 1

The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, Esq. With Notes by Dean Milman and M. Guizot. Edited, with additional Notes, by William Smith, LL.D. In Eight Volumes. London, 1855. Murray.

ART. II.—THE SPANISH CONQUEST IN AMERICA . . . 42

The Spanish Conquest in America, and its relation to the History of Slavery and to the Government of Colonies. By Arthur Helps. With Maps. Vols. I. and II. London, J. W. Parker. 1855.

ART. III.—THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DR. THOMAS YOUNG 69

Life of Thomas Young, M.D., F.R.S., &c. By George Peacock, D.D., Dean of Ely, &c. 8vo. London, Murray. 1855.

The Miscellaneous Works of Dr. T. Young. Edited by G. Peacock, D.D., Dean of Ely, and John Leitch, Esq. 3 vols. 8vo. London, Murray. 1855.

ART. IV.—ATHEISM 97

The First Cause; or, a Treatise upon the Being and Attributes of God. By Rev. J. C. Whish, M.A. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday. 1855.

The Burnett Prize-Essays.

Principles of Psychology. By Herbert Spencer. Longmans. 1855.

George Jacob Holyoake and Modern Atheism. An Essay. By S. D. Collet. Trübner. 1855.

The Reasoner for 1855. Edited by G. J. Holyoake. Holyoake, Fleet Street.

ART. V.—THE PRESENT STATE OF FRANCE 123

Napoléon le Petit. Par Victor Hugo. London, 1852.

ART. VI.—PHŒNICIA 156

Phœnicia. By John Kenrick, M.A. London, B. Fellowes. 1855.

PAGE

ART. VII.—W. M. THACKERAY, ARTIST AND MORALIST . 177

The Newcomes. By the Author of "Vanity Fair," &c.

Miscellanies, Prose and Verse. By W. M. Thackeray. Vols. I. and II. London, Bradbury and Evans. 1856.

ART. VIII.—FOREIGN POLICY AND THE NEXT CAMPAIGN . 213

General Treaty of Congress, signed at Vienna, June 9, 1815; with the three Annexes thereto, relating to the Kingdom of Poland and the Republic of Cracow. Presented to the House of Commons by her Majesty's command, in pursuance of their Address of the 8th February 1847.

Correspondence between Viscount Castlereagh (late Marquis of Londonderry) and the Emperor Alexander of Russia, respecting the Kingdom of Poland. Vienna, October, November, 1814. Presented to the House of Commons, February 1847.

Papers relative to the Suppression, by the Governments of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, of the free State of Cracow, and to the Annexation of that State to the Austrian Empire. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, February 1847.

Correspondence respecting the Relations between Greece and Turkey. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1854.

Eastern Papers. Part XIV. Negociation at Vienna. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1855.

Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts seit den Wiener Verträgen. Von G. G. Gervinus. Erster Band. Leipzig, 1855.

The Polish Question, from the German Point of View. By a German Statesman. Translated from the German. London, Ridgway.

LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES . 239

THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

CONTENTS OF NO. IV.—APRIL 1856.

PAGE

ART. I.—CHARACTERISTICS OF GOETHE 241

The Life and Works of Goethe: with Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries, from published and unpublished sources. By G. H. Lewes. 2 vols. Nutt, 1855.

Freundschaftliche Briefe von Goethe und seiner Frau an Nicolaus Meyer, aus den Jahren 1800-1831. Leipzig, Hartung, 1856. [Friendly Letters from Goethe and his Wife to Nicolas Meyer, between the years 1800 and 1831. Leipzic, 1856.]

ART. II.—EARLY ENGLISH EXPLORERS 297

The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, Knt., in his Voyage into the South Sea in 1593. Reprinted from the Edition of 1622, and edited by Captain C. R. Drinkwater Bethune, R.N., C.B.

Select Letters of Columbus; with Original Documents relating to the Discovery of the New World. Translated and edited by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum.

The Discoverie of the Empire of Guiana by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knt. Edited, with copious Explanatory Notes, and a Biographical Memoir, by Sir Robert H. Schomburgh, Phil. D., &c.

Sir Francis Drake his Voyage, 1595, by Thomas Maynarde; together with the Spanish Account of Drake's Attack on Puerto Rico. Edited, from the original Ms., by W. D. Cooley, Esq.

Narratives of Early Voyages undertaken for the Discovery of a Passage to Cathaia and India, by the North-west; with Selections from the Records of the Worshipful Fellowship of the Merchants of London, trading into the East Indies; and from Mss. in the Library of the British Museum. Now first published, by Thomas Rundall, Esq.

The Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia, expressing the Cosmographie and Comodities of the Country; together with the Manners and Customs of the People, gathered and observed as well by those who first went thither as collected by William Strachey, Gent., the First Secretary of the Colony. Now first edited, from the original Manuscript in the British Museum, by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum.

PAGE

Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America and the Isles adjacent. Collected and published by Richard Hakluyt, Prebendary of Bristol, in the year 1582. Edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by John Winter Jones, Esq., of the British Museum.

A Collection of Documents on Japan; with a Commentary. By Thomas Rundall, Esq.

The Discovery and Conquest of Florida, by Don Ferdinando de Soto. Translated out of Portuguese by Richard Hakluyt; and edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by W. B. Rye, Esq., of the British Museum.

Notes upon Russia: being a translation from the earliest account of that country, entitled Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii, of the Baron Sigismund von Herberstein, Ambassador from the Court of Germany to the Grand Prince Vasiley Ivanovich, in the years 1517 and 1526. Translated and edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum. 2 vols.

The Geography of Hudson's Bay. Being the Remarks of Captain W. Coats, in many Voyages to that Locality, between the years 1727 and 1751. With an Appendix, containing extracts from the Log of Captain Middleton on his Voyage for the Discovery of the North-west Passage, in H.M.S. "Furnace," in 1741-2. Edited by John Barrow, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A.

Three Voyages by the North-east, towards Cathay and China, undertaken by the Dutch in the years 1594, 1595, and 1596, with their discovery of Spitzbergen, their Residence of ten months in Novaya Zemlya, and their safe return in two open boats. By Gerrit de Veer. Edited by Charles T. Beke, Esq., Ph. D., F.S.A.

The History of the great and mighty Kingdom of China, and the situation thereof. Compiled by the Padre Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza; and now reprinted from the early translation of R. Parke. Edited by Sir George T. Staunton, Bart. With an Introduction by R. H. Major, Esq. 2 vols.

The World encompassed by Sir Francis Drake: being his next Voyage to that to Nombre de Dios. Collated with an unpublished Manuscript of Francis Fletcher, Chaplain to the Expedition. With Appendices illustrative of the Voyage, and Introduction, by W. S. W. Vaux, Esq., M.A.

The History of the two Tartar Conquerors of China, including the two Journeys into Tartary of Father Ferdinand Verbiest; from the French of Père Pierre Joseph d'Orleans. To which is added, Father Pereira's Journey into Tartary; from the Dutch of Nicolaas Witsen. Translated and edited by the Earl of Ellesmere. With an Introduction by R. H. Major, Esq.

A Collection of Documents on Spitzbergen and Greenland. Edited by Adam White, Esq., of the British Museum.

PAGE

ART. III.—UNIVERSITY REFORM:—CAMBRIDGE . . . 328

Report of the Commissioners for the Reform of the University of Cambridge. 1852.

Correspondence of the Cambridge Commissioners with the Government. 1855.

Bill for the Reform of the University of Cambridge. 1855.

Hansard's Debates. 1855.

Statutes of the University of Cambridge, from the 13th to the 16th century. By J. Heywood. 2 vols. Bohn, 1855.

Cambridge Calendar. Deighton, Cambridge, 1856.

Oxford Essays. J. W. Parker and Son, London, 1855.

Cambridge Essays. J. W. Parker and Son, London, 1855.

ART. IV.—MR. MACAULAY 357

The History of England from the Accession of James the Second. By Thomas Babington Macaulay. Longman.

ART. V.—CONVERSATION AND POETRY OF ROGERS . . 387

Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers. London, Edward Moxon, 1856.

The Poetical Works of Samuel Rogers. London, Edward Moxon, 1853.

ART. VI.—THE ENGLISH STAGE 412

Catalogue of Dramatic Pieces, the Property of the Members of the Dramatic Authors' Society or their representatives, made up to the 1st of February 1856.

ART. VII.—THE POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF AMERICA . 433

Things as they are in America. By William Chambers. Edinburgh and London, 1854.

Life of Horace Greeley, Editor of the New-York Tribune. By J. Parton. New York, 1855.

Notes on Public Subjects, made during a Tour in the United States and in Canada. By H. Seymour Tremenheere. London, 1852.

The Constitution of the United States compared with our own. By H. Seymour Tremenheere. London, 1855.

Private Correspondence of Henry Clay. By C. Cotton, LL.D. New York, 1856.

PAGE

ART. VIII.—THE AUSTRIAN PEACE 468

The Moniteur of the 2d of February 1856.

ART. IX.—MEDIATORIAL RELIGION 478

The Nature of the Atonement, and its relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life. By John M'Leod Campbell. Cambridge, Macmillan and Co. 1856.

LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES . 501

THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

JANUARY 1856.

ART. I.—EDWARD GIBBON.

The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, Esq. With Notes by Dean Milman and M. Guizot. Edited, with additional Notes, by William Smith, LL.D. In Eight Volumes. London, 1855. Murray.

"PAPA, I wish I was the Roman Empire;" "Child, don't talk nonsense;" was a dialogue of the early years of this century. This is the fate of Gibbon; no one does or can separate the historian from his subject. If you ask as to the antiquities of Constantinople, you are told those are the times which are "in Gibbon." Mr. Carlyle, who never exaggerates, speaks of Madame de Staël, in youth of course, romping about the knees of the "Decline and Fall." He plainly traced a resemblance himself; for he has narrated the events of his own life, "his progression from London to Buriton and from Buriton to London," in the same majestic periods which record the downfall of states and empires. What the commonplace parent thought absurd, has in simple reality happened. It may be useful to attempt in a few pages to substitute a notion of the man for the indistinct idea of a huge imperial being.

The diligence of their descendant accumulated many particulars of the remote annals of the Gibbon family; but its real founder was the grandfather of the historian, who lived in the times of the "South Sea." He was a capital man of business according to the cu[illegible] of that age—a dealer in many kinds of merchandise—rivalling probably the "complete tradesman" of Defoe, who was

to understand the price and quality of *all* articles made within the kingdom, and be in consequence a complete master of the inland trade. The peculiar forte, however, of Edward Gibbon, the grandfather, was the article "shares;" his genius, like that of Mr. Hudson, had a natural tendency towards a commerce in the metaphysical and non-existent; and he was fortunate in the age on which his lot was thrown. It afforded many opportunities of gratifying that taste. A great deal has been written and is being written on panics and manias—a great deal more than with the most outstretched intellect we are able to follow or conceive; but one thing seems certain, that at particular times a great many stupid people have a great deal of stupid money. Many saving people have only the faculty of saving; they accumulate ably, and contemplate their accumulations with approbation; but what to do with them they do not know. Aristotle, who was not in trade, had a great idea that money is barren; and barren it certainly is to quiet ladies, rural clergymen, and country misers. Several excellent economists have plans for preventing improvident speculation; one would abolish Peel's act, and substitute one-pound notes; another would retain Peel's act, and make the calling for one-pound notes a capital crime: but the only real way is, not to allow any man to have a hundred pounds who cannot prove to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor that he knows what to do with a hundred pounds. The want of this obvious and proper precaution allows the accumulation of wealth in the hands of rectors, sweepers, grandmothers, and other persons who have no knowledge of business, and no idea except that their money now produces nothing, and ought and must be forced immediately to produce something. "I wish," said one of this class, "for the largest immediate income, and I am therefore naturally disposed to purchase an *advowson*." Every now and then, from causes which are not to the present purpose, the money of people of this class—the blind capital (as oculists call it) of the country—happens to be particularly large and craving; it seeks for some one to devour it, and there is "plethora"—it finds some one, and there is "speculation"—it is devoured, and there is "panic." The age of Mr. Gibbon was one of these. The interest of money was very low, perhaps under three per cent. The usual consequence followed; able men started wonderful undertakings; the ablest of all, a company "for carrying on an undertaking of great importance, but no one to know what it was." Mr. Gibbon was not idle. According to the narrative of his grandson, he already filled a considerable position, was worth sixty thousand pounds, and had great influence both in Parliament and in the City. He applied himself to the greatest bubble of all—one so great, that

it is spoken of in many books as the cause and parent of all contemporary bubbles—the great South-Sea Company—the design of which was to reduce the interest on the national debt, which, oddly enough, it in fact effected, and to trade exclusively to the South Sea or Spanish America, where, of course, it never did trade. Mr. Gibbon became a director, sold and bought, traded and prospered; and was considered, no doubt with truth, to have obtained much money. The bubble was essentially a fashionable one. Public intelligence and the quickness of communication did not then as now at once spread pecuniary information and misinformation to secluded districts; but fine ladies, men of fashion—the London world—ever anxious to make as much of its money as it can, and then wholly unwise and not now very wise in discovering how the most *was* to be made of it—"went in" and speculated largely. Of course, all was favourable so long as the shares were rising; the price was at one time very high, and the agitation very general; it was, in a word, the railway mania in the South Sea. All at once the shares "hesitated," declined, and fell; and there was an outcry against every body concerned in the matter, very like the outcry against the *οἱ περὶ* Hudson in our own time. The results, however, were very different. Whatever may be said, and, judging from late experience, a good deal is likely to be said, as to the advantages of civilisation and education, it seems certain that they tend to diminish a simple-minded energy. The Parliament of 1720 did not, like the Parliament of 1847, allow itself to be bored and incommoded by legal minutiæ, neither did they forego the use of plain words. A committee reported the discovery of "a train of the deepest villany and fraud *hell* ever contrived to ruin a nation;" the directors of the company were arrested, and Mr. Gibbon among the rest; he was compelled to give in a list of his effects: the general wish was that a retrospective act should be immediately passed, which would impose on him penalties something like, or even more severe than those now enforced on Paul and Strahan. In the end, however, Mr. Gibbon escaped with a parliamentary conversation upon his affairs. His estate amounted to 140,000*l.*; and as this was a great sum, there was an obvious suspicion that he was a great criminal. The whole scene must have been very curious. "Allowances of twenty pounds or one shilling were facetiously voted. A vague report that a director had formerly been concerned in another project by which some unknown persons had lost their money, was admitted as a proof of his actual guilt. One man was ruined because he had dropped a foolish speech that his horses should feed upon gold; another because he was grown so proud, that one day, at the Treasury, he had refused a civil answer to per-

sons far above him." The vanity of his descendant is evidently a little tried by the peculiar severity with which his grandfather was treated. Out of his hundred and forty thousand pounds it was only proposed that he should retain fifteen; and on an amendment even this was reduced to ten thousand. Yet there is some ground for believing that the acute energy and practised pecuniary power which had been successful in obtaining so large a fortune, were likewise applied with science to the inferior task of retaining some of it. The historian indeed says, "On these ruins," the 10,000*l.* aforesaid, "with skill and credit of which parliament had not been able to deprive him, my grandfather erected the edifice of a new fortune: the labours of sixteen years were amply rewarded; and I have reason to believe that the second structure was not much inferior to the first." But this only shows how far a family feeling may bias a sceptical judgment. The credit of a man in Mr. Gibbon's position could not be very lucrative; and his skill must have been enormous to have obtained so much at the end of life, in such circumstances, in so few years. Had he been an early Christian, the narrative of his descendant would have contained an insidious hint, that "pecuniary property *may* be so secreted as to defy the awkward approaches of political investigation." It was on this property, in whatever way acquired or retained, that the social position of the Gibbons was established; and the remnants of it preserved from death the immortal author of the Decline and Fall.

The son of this great speculator, the historian's father, was a man to spend a fortune quietly. He is not related to have indulged in any particular expense, and nothing is more difficult to follow than the pecuniary fortunes of deceased families; but one thing is certain, that the property which descended to the historian — putting out of the question all minor and subsidiary modes of diminution, such as daughters, settlements, legacies, and so forth — was enormously less than 140,000*l.*; and if the statistics above quoted are correct, the second generation of the family must have made itself very happy out of the savings of the past generation, and without caring for the poverty of the next. Nothing that is related, indeed, of the historian's father indicates a strong judgment or an acute discrimination; and there are some scarcely dubious signs of a rather weak character.

Edward Gibbon, the historian, was born on the 27th of April 1737. Of his mother we hear scarcely any thing; and what we do hear is not remarkably favourable. It seems that she was a faint inoffensive woman, of ordinary capacity, who left a very slight trace of her influence on the character of her son; who did little, and died early. The real mother, as he is

careful to explain, of his understanding and education was her sister, and his aunt, *Mrs.* Catherine Posten, according to the speech of that age, a maiden lady of much vigour and capacity, and for whom her pupil really seems to have felt as much affection as was consistent with a rather easy and cool nature. There is a panegyric on her in the *Memoirs;* and in a long letter upon the occasion of her death, he deposes: "To her care I am indebted in earliest infancy for the preservation of my life and health. . . . To her instructions I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books, which is still the pleasure and glory of my life; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptress I ever had. As I grew up, an intercourse of thirty years endeared her to me as the faithful friend and the agreeable companion. You have observed with what freedom and confidence we lived," &c. &c. To a less sentimental mind, which takes a more tranquil view of aunts and relatives, it is perhaps satisfactory to find that he could not write to her. "I wish," he continues, "I had as much to applaud and as little to reproach in my conduct to Mrs. Posten since I left England; and when I reflect that my letter would have soothed and comforted her decline, I feel" what an ardent nephew would naturally feel at so unprecedented an event. Leaving his maturer years out of the question—a possible rhapsody of affectionate eloquence —she really seems to have been of the greatest use to him in infancy. His health was very imperfect. We hear much of rheumatism, and lameness, and weakness; and he was clearly in general unable to join in work and play with ordinary boys. On this account he was moved from one school to another, never staying any where very long, and owing what knowledge he obtained rather to a strong retentive understanding than to any external stimulants or instruction. At one place he gained an acquaintance with the Latin elements at the price of "many tears and some blood." At last he was consigned to the instruction of an elegant clergyman, the Rev. Philip Francis, who had obtained notoriety by a metrical translation of Horace, the laxity of which is even yet complained of by construing schoolboys, and who, having a truly Horatian taste for combining the pleasures of a town with those of a country life, went to London as often as he could, and translated *invisa negotia* as "boys to beat."

In school-work, therefore, Gibbon had uncommon difficulties and unusual deficiencies; but these were much more than counterbalanced by a habit which often accompanies a sickly childhood, and is very often the commencement of a studious life,—the habit of desultory reading. The instructiveness of this is of

not properly comprehended. S. T. Coleridge used to say that he felt a great superiority over those who had not read—and fondly read—fairy tales in their childhood; he thought they wanted a sense which he possessed, the perception, or apperception—we do not know which he used to say it was—of the unity and wholeness of the universe. As to fairy tales, this is a hard saying; but as to desultory reading it is certainly true. Some people have known a time in life when there was no book they could not read. The fact of its being a book went immensely in its favour. In early life there is an opinion that the obvious thing to do with a horse is to ride it; of a cake, to eat it; of sixpence, to spend it: a few boys carry this further, and think the obviously natural thing to do with a book is to read it. There is an argument from design in the subject: if the book was not meant for that purpose, for what purpose was it meant? Of course, of any understanding of the works so perused there is no question or idea. There is a legend of Bentham, when still in long-clothes, climbing to the height of a huge stool and sitting there evening after evening with two candles engaged in the perusal of Rapin's history. It might just as well have been any other book. The doctrine of utility had not then dawned on its immortal teacher; *cui bono* was an idea unknown to him. He would have been ready to read about Egypt, about Spain, about the coals in Borneo, the teak-wood in India, the current in the river Mississippi, on natural history or human history, on theology or morals, on the state of the dark ages or the state of the light ages, on Augustulus or Lord Chatham, on the first century or the seventeenth, on the moon, the millennium, or the whole duty of man. Just then, in fact, reading is an end in itself. At that time of life you no more think of a future consequence, of the remote, the very remote possibility of deriving knowledge from the perusal of a book, than you expect so great a result from spinning a peg-top. You spin the top, and you read the book; and then that scene of life is exhausted. In such studies, of all prose perhaps the best is history. One page is so like another; battle No. 1 is so much on a par with battle No. 2. Truth may be, as they say, stranger than fiction, abstractedly and in itself; but in actual books, novels are certainly odder and more astounding than correct history. It will be said, what is the use of this? Why not leave the reading of great books till a great age? Why plague and perplex childhood with complex facts remote from its experience and inapprehensible by its imagination? The reply is, that though in all great and combined facts there is much which childhood cannot thoroughly imagine or comprehend, there is also in very many a great deal which can only be truly apprehended for the first time at that age. Catch an American of thirty;—tell him about the

battle of Marathon; what will he be able to comprehend of all that *you* mean by it; of all that halo which early impression and years of remembrance have cast around it? He may add up the killed and wounded, estimate the missing, and take the dimensions of Greece and Athens; but he will not seem to care much. He may say, "Well, sir, perhaps it was a smart thing in that small country; but it is a long time ago, and in *my* country James K. Burnup" did that which he will at length explain to you. Or try an experiment on yourself. Read the account of a Circassian victory, equal in numbers, in daring, in romance, to the old battle. Will you be able to feel about it at all in the same way? It is impossible. You cannot form a new set of associations; your mind is involved in pressing facts, your memory choked by a thousand details; the liveliness of fancy is gone with the childhood by which it was enlivened. Schamyl will never seem as great as Leonidas or Miltiades; Cnokemof, or whoever the Russian is, cannot be so imposing as Xerxes; the unpronounceable place cannot strike on your heart like Marathon or Platæa. Moreover, there is the further advantage which Coleridge shadowed forth in the remark we cited. Youth has a principle of consolidation. We begin with the whole. Small sciences are the labours of our manhood; but the round universe is the plaything of the boy. His fresh mind shoots out vaguely and crudely into the infinite and eternal. Nothing is hid from the depth of it: there are no boundaries to its vague and wandering vision. Early science, it has been said, begins in utter nonsense; it would be truer to say that it starts with boyish fancies. How absurd seem the notions of the first Greeks! Who could believe now that air or water was the principle, the pervading substance, the eternal material of all things? Such affairs will never explain a thick rock; they scarcely account for pea-soup; and what a white original for a green and sky-blue world! Yet people disputed in those ages not whether it was either of those substances, but which of them it was. And doubtless there was a great deal, at least in point of quantity, to be said on both sides. Boys are improved; but some in our own day have asked, "Mamma, I say, what did God make the world of?" and several, who did not venture on speech, have had an idea of some one gray primitive thing, have felt a difficulty as to how the red came, and wondered how marble could *ever* have been the same as moonshine. This is in truth the picture of life. We begin with the infinite and eternal, which we shall never apprehend; and these form a framework, a schedule, a set of co-ordinates to which we refer all which we learn later. At first, like the old Greek, "we look up to the whole sky, and are lost in the one and the all;" in the end we classify and enumerate, learn each star, calculate

distances, draw cramped diagrams on the unbounded sky, write a paper on α Cygni and a treatise on ϵ Draconis, map special facts upon the indefinite void, and engrave precise details on the infinite and everlasting. So in history; somehow the whole comes in boyhood; the details later and in manhood. The wonderful series going far back to the times of old patriarchs with their flocks and herds, the keen-eyed Greek, the stately Roman, the watching Jew, the uncouth Goth, the horrid Hun, the settled picture of the unchanging East, the restless shifting of the rapid West, the rise of the cold and classical civilisation, its fall, the rough impetuous middle ages, the vague warm picture of ourselves and home,—when did we learn these? Not yesterday nor to-day; but long ago, in the first dawn of reason, in the original flow of fancy. What we learn afterwards are but the accurate littlenesses of the great topic, the dates and tedious facts. Those who begin late learn only these; but the happy first feel the mystic associations and the progress of the whole.

There is no better illustration of all this than Gibbon. Few have begun early with a more desultory reading, and fewer still have described it so skilfully. "From the ancient I leaped to the modern world: many crude lumps of Speed, Rapin, Mezeray, Davila, Machiavel, Father Paul, Bower, &c., I devoured like so many novels; and I swallowed with the same voracious appetite the descriptions of India and China, of Mexico and Peru. My first introduction to the historic scenes which have since engaged so many years of my life must be ascribed to an accident. In the summer of 1751 I accompanied my father on a visit to Mr. Hoare's, in Wiltshire; but I was less delighted with the beauties of Stourhead than with discovering in the library a common book, the *Continuation of Echard's Roman History*, which is indeed executed with more skill and taste than the previous work. To me the reigns of the successors of Constantine were absolutely new; and I was immersed in the passage of the Goths over the Danube when the summons of the dinner-bell reluctantly dragged me from my intellectual feast. This transient glance served rather to irritate than to appease my curiosity; and as soon as I returned to Bath I procured the second and third volumes of Howel's *History of the World*, which exhibit the Byzantine period on a larger scale. Mahomet and his Saracens soon fixed my attention; and some instinct of criticism directed me to the genuine sources. Simon Ockley, an original in every sense, first opened my eyes; and I was led from one book to another till I had ranged round the circle of Oriental history. Before I was sixteen I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks; and the same ardour urged me to guess at the French of

d'Herbelot, and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pocock's *Abulfaragius.*" To this day the schoolboy-student of the Decline and Fall feels the traces of that schoolboy reading. *Once,* he is conscious, the author, like him, felt, and solely felt, the magnificent progress of the great story and the scenic aspect of marvellous events.

A more sudden effect was at hand. However exalted may seem the praises which we have given to loose and unplanned reading, we are not saying that it is the sole ingredient of a good education. Besides this sort of education, which some boys will voluntarily and naturally give themselves, there needs, of course, another and more rigorous kind, which must be impressed upon them from without. The terrible difficulty of early life—the *use* of pastors and masters—really is, that they compel boys to a distinct mastery of that which they do not wish to learn. There is nothing to be said for a preceptor who is not dry. Mr. Carlyle describes with bitter satire the fate of one of his heroes who was obliged to acquire whole systems of information in which he, the hero, saw no use, and which he kept as far as might be in a vacant corner of his mind. And this is the very point—dry language, tedious mathematics, a thumbed grammar, a detested slate, form gradually an interior separate intellect, exact in its information, rigid in its requirements, disciplined in its exercises. The two grow together, the early natural fancy touching the far extremities of the universe, lightly playing with the scheme of all things; the precise, compacted memory slowly accumulating special facts, exact habits, clear and painful conceptions. At last, as it were in a moment, the cloud breaks up, the division sweeps away; we find that in fact these exercises which puzzled us, these languages which we hated, these details which we despised, are the instruments of true thought, are the very keys and openings, the exclusive access to the knowledge which we loved.

In this second education the childhood of Gibbon had been very defective. He had never been placed under any rigid training. In his first boyhood he disputed with his aunt, "that were I master of Greek and Latin, I must interpret to myself in English the thoughts of the original, and that such extemporary versions must be inferior to the elaborate translation of professed scholars: a silly sophism," as he remarks, "which could not easily be confuted by a person ignorant of any other language than her own." Ill-health, a not very wise father, an ill-chosen succession of schools and pedagogues, prevented his acquiring exact knowledge in the regular subjects of study. His own description is the best—"erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and ignorance of which a schoolboy should have been ashamed." The amiable Mr. Francis, who was to have repaired the deficien

went to London, and forgot him. On a sudden his father put on his hat, took a resolution, and sent him to Oxford at sixteen.

It is probable that a worse place could not have been found. The University of Oxford was then perhaps at the very nadir of her history and efficiency. The public professorial training of the middle ages had died away, and the intramural collegiate system of the present time had not begun. The University had ceased to be a teaching body, and had not yet become an examining body. "The professors," says Adam Smith, who had studied there, "have given up almost the pretence of lecturing." "The examination," said a great judge some years later, "was a farce in my time. I was asked who founded University College; and I said, though the fact is now doubted, that King Alfred founded it; and *that* was the examination." The colleges, deprived of the superintendence and watchfulness of their natural sovereign, fell, as Gibbon remarks, into "port and prejudice." The fellows were a close corporation; they were chosen from every conceivable motive—because they were respectable men, because they were good fellows, because they were brothers of other fellows, because their fathers had patronage in the church. Men so appointed could not be expected to be very diligent in the instruction of youth; many colleges did not even profess it; that of All Souls has continued down to our own time to deny that it has any thing to do with it. Undoubtedly a person who came thither accurately and rigidly drilled in technical scholarship found many means and some motives to pursue it. Some tutorial system probably existed at most colleges. Learning was not wholly useless in the church. The English gentleman has ever loved a nice and classical scholarship. But these advantages were open only to persons who had received a very rigid and peculiar training, and who were voluntarily disposed to discipline themselves still more. To the mass of mankind the University was a "graduating machine;" the colleges, monopolist residences,—hotels without bells.

Taking the place as it stood, the lot of Gibbon may be thought rather fortunate. He was placed at Magdalen, whose fascinating walks, so beautiful in the later autumn, still recal the name of Addison, the example of the merits, as Gibbon is of the deficiencies, of Oxford. His first tutor was, in his own opinion, "one of the best of the tribe." "Dr. Waldegrave was a learned and pious man, of a mild disposition, strict morals, and abstemious life, who seldom mingled in the politics or the jollity of the college. But his knowledge of the world was confined to the University; his learning was of the last, rather than of the present age; his temper was indolent; his faculties, which were not of the first rate, had been relaxed

by the climate; and he was satisfied, like his fellows, with the slight and superficial discharge of an important trust. As soon as my tutor had sounded the insufficiency of his disciple in school-learning, he proposed that we should read every morning, from ten to eleven, the comedies of Terence. The sum of my improvement in the University of Oxford is confined to three or four Latin plays; and even the study of an elegant classic, which might have been illustrated by a comparison of ancient and modern theatres, was reduced to a dry and literal interpretation of the author's text. During the first weeks I constantly attended these lessons in my tutor's room; but as they appeared equally devoid of profit and pleasure, I was once tempted to try the experiment of a formal apology. The apology was accepted with a smile. I repeated the offence with less ceremony; the excuse was admitted with the same indulgence: the slightest motive of laziness or indisposition, the most trifling avocation at home or abroad, was allowed as a worthy impediment; nor did my tutor appear conscious of my absence or neglect. Had the hour of lecture been constantly filled, a single hour was a small portion of my academic leisure. No plan of study was recommended for my use; no exercises were prescribed for his inspection; and, at the most precious season of youth, whole days and weeks were suffered to elapse without labour or amusement, without advice or account."

The name of his second tutor is concealed in asterisks, and the sensitive conscience of Dean Milman will not allow him to insert a name "which *Gibbon* thought proper to suppress." The account, however, of the anonymous person is sufficiently graphic. "Dr. * * * * well remembered that he had a salary to receive, and only forgot that he had a duty to perform. Instead of guiding the studies and watching over the behaviour of his disciple, I was never summoned to attend even the ceremony of a lecture; and excepting one voluntary visit to his rooms, during the eight months of his titular office the tutor and pupil lived in the same college as strangers to each other." It added to the evils of this neglect, that Gibbon was much younger than most of the students; and that his temper, which was through life reserved, was then very shy. His appearance, too, was odd; "a thin little figure, with a large head, disputing and arguing with the greatest ability." Of course he was a joke among undergraduates; he consulted his tutor as to studying Arabic, and was seen buying *La Bibliothèque Orientale d'Herbelot,* and immediately a legend was diffused that he had turned Mahomedan. The random cast was not so far from the mark: cut off by peculiarities from the society of young people; deprived of regular tuition and systematic employment; tumbling about

among crude masses of heterogeneous knowledge; alone with the heated brain of youth,—he did what an experienced man would expect—he framed a theory of all things. No doubt it seemed to him the most natural thing in the world. Was he to be the butt of ungenial wine-parties, or spend his lonely hours on shreds of languages? Was he not to know the *truth?* There were the old problems, the everlasting difficulties, the *mœnia mundi*, the Hercules' pillars of the human imagination—"fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute." Surely these should come first; when we had learned the great landmarks, understood the guiding-stars, we might amuse ourselves with small points, and make a plaything of curious information. What particular theory the mind frames in these circumstances is a good deal matter of special accident. The *data* for considering these difficulties are not within its reach. Whether man be or be not born to solve the "mystery of the knowable," he certainly is not born to solve it at seventeen, with the first hot rush of the untrained mind. The selection of Gibbon was remarkable: he became a Roman Catholic.

It seems now so natural that an Oxford man should take this step, that one can hardly understand the astonishment it created. Lord Sheffield tells us that the Privy Council interfered; and with good administrative judgment examined a London bookseller—some Mr. Lewis—who had no concern in it. In the manor-house of Buriton it would have probably created less sensation if "dear Edward" had announced his intention of becoming a monkey. The English belief always is that the Papist is a kind of *creature;* some think that the Oxford student is its young: and every sound mind would prefer a beloved child to produce a tail, a hide of hair, and a taste for nuts, in comparison with transubstantiation, wax-candles, and a belief in the glories of Mary.

What exact motives impelled Gibbon to this step cannot now be certainly known; the autobiography casts a mist over them; but from what appears, his conversion partly much resembled, and partly altogether differed from, the Oxford conversions of our own time. We hear nothing of the notes of a church, or the sin of the Reformation; and Gibbon had not an opportunity of even rejecting Mr. Sewell's theory that it is "a holy obligation to acquiesce in the opinions of your grandmother." His memoirs throw a halo of great names over the occurrence—Bossuet, *the History of Protestant Variations*, &c. &c.—and he speaks with becoming dignity of falling by a noble hand. He mentioned to Lord Sheffield, as having had a preponderating influence over him, the works of Father Parsons, who lived in Queen Elizabeth's time. But in all probability these were

secondary persuasions, justifications after the event. No young man, or hardly any young man of seventeen, was ever converted by a systematic treatise, especially if written in another age, wearing an obsolete look, speaking a language which scarcely seems that of this world. There is an unconscious reasoning: "The world has had this book before it so long, and has withstood it. There must be something wrong; it seems all right on the surface, but a flaw there must be." The mass of the volumes, too, is unfavourable. "All the treatises in the world," says the young convert in *Loss and Gain*, "are not equal to giving one a view in a moment." What the youthful mind requires is this short decisive argument, this view in a moment, this flash as it were of the understanding, which settles all, and diffuses a conclusive light at once and for ever over the whole. It is so much the pleasanter if the young mind can strike this view out for itself, from materials which are forced upon it from the controversies of the day; if it can find a certain solution of pending questions, and show itself wiser even than the wisest of its own, the very last age. So far as appears, this was the fortune of Gibbon. "It was not long," he says, "since Dr. Middleton's *Free Inquiry* had sounded an alarm in the theological world; much ink and much gall had been spent in defence of the primitive miracles; and the two dullest of their champions were crowned with academic honours by the University of Oxford. The name of Middleton was unpopular; and his proscription very naturally led me to peruse his writings and those of his antagonists." It is not difficult to discover in this work easy and striking arguments which might lead an untaught mind to the communion of Rome. As to the peculiar belief of its author there has been much controversy, with which we have not here the least concern; but the natural conclusion to which it would lead a simple intellect is, that all miracles are equally certain or equally uncertain.

"It being agreed, then," says the acute controversialist, "that in the original promise of these miraculous gifts there is no intimation of any particular period to which their continuance was limited, the next question is, by what sort of evidence the precise time of their duration is to be determined? But to this point one of the writers just referred to excuses himself, as we have seen, from giving any answer; and thinks it sufficient to declare in general that *the earliest fathers unanimously affirm them to have continued down to their times*. Yet he has not told us, as he ought to have done, to what age he limits the character of *the earliest fathers;* whether to the second or to the third century, or, with the generality of our writers, means also to include the fourth. But to whatever age he may restrain it, the

difficulty at last will be to assign a reason why we must needs stop there. In the mean while, by his appealing thus to the *earliest fathers* only as unanimous on this article, a common reader would be apt to infer that the later fathers are more cold or diffident, or divided upon it; whereas the reverse of this is true, and the more we descend from those earliest fathers the more strong and explicit we find their successors in attesting the perpetual succession and daily exertion of the same miraculous powers in their several ages; so that, if the cause must be determined by *the unanimous consent of fathers,* we shall find as much reason to believe that those powers were continued even to the latest ages as to any other, how early and primitive soever, after the days of the apostles. But the same writer gives us two reasons why he does not choose to say any thing upon the subject of their duration; 1st, because *there is not light enough in history to settle it;* 2dly, because *the thing itself is of no concern to us.* As to his first reason, I am at a loss to conceive what further light a professed advocate of the primitive ages and fathers can possibly require in this case. For as far as the church-historians can illustrate or throw light upon any thing, there is not a single point in all history so constantly, explicitly, and unanimously affirmed by them all, as the continual succession of these powers through all ages, from the earliest father who first mentions them down to the time of the Reformation. Which same succession is still further deduced by persons of the most eminent character for their probity, learning, and dignity in the Romish church, to this very day. So that the only doubt which can remain with us is, whether the church-historians are to be trusted or not; for if any credit be due to them in the present case, it must reach either to all or to none; because the reason of believing them in any one age will be found to be of equal force in all, as far as it depends on the characters of the persons attesting, or the nature of the things attested."

In *terms* this and the whole of Middleton's argument is so shaped as to avoid including in its scope the miracles of Scripture, which are mentioned throughout with eulogiums and acquiescence, and so as to make you doubt whether the author believed them or not. This is exactly one of the pretences which the young strong mind delights to tear down, which would say, "This writer evidently *means* that the apostolic miracles have just as much evidence and no more than the popish or the patristic; and how strong"—for Middleton is a master of telling statement—" he shows that evidence to be! I won't give up the apostolic miracles, I cannot; yet I must believe what has so much of historical testimony in its favour. It is no *reductio ad absurdum* that we must go over to the church of Rome; it is

the most diffused of Christian creeds, the oldest of Christian churches." And so the argument of this sceptic becomes, as often since, the most efficient instrument of the all-believing and all-determining church.

The consternation of Gibbon's relatives seems to have been enormous. They cast about what to do. From the experience of Oxford, they perhaps thought that it would be useless to have recourse to the Anglican clergy; they had tried their best, it was perhaps fancied, and had failed. So they took him to Mr. Mallet, a deist, perhaps an atheist, to see if he could do any thing; but he did nothing. Their next step was nearly as extraordinary. They placed him at Lausanne in the house of M. Pavilliard, a French Protestant minister. After the easy income, complete independence, and unlimited credit of an English undergraduate, he was thrown into a foreign country, deprived, as he says, by ignorance of the language both of "speech and hearing,"—in the position of a schoolboy, with a small allowance of pocket-money, and without the Epicurean comforts on which he already set some value. He laments the "indispensable comfort of a servant," and the "sordid and uncleanly table of Madame Pavilliard." In our own day the watchful sagacity of Cardinal Wiseman would hardly allow a promising convert of expectations and talents to remain unsolaced in so pitiful a situation; we should hear of some soothing offers of flight or succour, of some gentle insinuation of a popish domestic and interesting repasts. But the attention of the Holy See a hundred years ago was little directed to our English youth, and Gibbon was left to endure his position.

It is curious that he made himself comfortable. Though destitute of external comforts which he did not despise, he found what was the greatest luxury to his disposition, steady study and regular tuition. His tutor was, of course, to convert him if he could; but as they had no language in common, there was the preliminary occupation of teaching French. During five years both tutor and pupil steadily exerted themselves to repair the defects of a neglected and ill-grounded education. We hear of the perusal of Terence, Virgil, Horace, and Tacitus. Cicero was translated into French, and translated back again into Latin. In both languages the pupil's progress was sound and good. From letters of his which still exist, it is clear that he then acquired the exact and steady knowledge of Latin of which he afterwards made so much use. His circumstances compelled him to master French. If his own letters are to be trusted, he would be an example of his own doctrine, that no one is thoroughly master of more than one language at a time; they read like the letters of a Frenchman trying and failing to write English. But perhaps

there was some wish to magnify his continental progress, and towards the end of the time some wish to make his friends fear he was forgetting his own language.

Meantime the work of conversion was not forgotten. In some letters which are still extant, M. Pavilliard celebrates the triumph of his logic. "J'ai renversé," says the pastor, "l'infaillibilité de l'église; j'ai prouvé que jamais St. Pierre n'a été chef des apôtres; que quand il l'aurait été, le pape n'est point son successeur; qu'il est douteux que St. Pierre ait jamais été à Rome, mais supposé qu'il y ait été, il n'a pas été évêque de cette ville; que la transubstantiation est une invention humaine, et peu ancienne dans l'église," &c., and so on through the usual list of Protestant arguments. He magnifies perhaps a little Gibbon's strength of conviction, as it makes the success of his own arguments seem more splendid; but states two curious things, first, that Gibbon at least *pretended* to believe in the Pretender, and what is more amazing still—all but incredible—that he fasted. A curious youth for a sceptical and Epicurean historian!

It is probable, however, that the skill of the Swiss pastor was not the really operating cause of the event. Perhaps experience shows that the converts which Rome has made with the threat of unbelief and the weapons of the sceptic have rarely been permanent or advantageous to her. It is at best but a dangerous logic to drive men to the edge and precipice of scepticism, in the hope that they will recoil in horror to the very centre of credulity. It may happen that men may show their courage—that they will vanquish the *argumentum ad terrorem*—that they will not find scepticism so terrible. This last was Gibbon's case. A more insidious adversary than the Swiss theology was at hand to sap his Roman Catholic belief. Pavilliard had a fair French library—not ill-stored in the recent publications of that age—of which he allowed his pupil the continual use. It was as impossible to open any of them and not come in contact with infidelity, as to come to England and not to see a green field. Scepticism is not so much a part of the French literature of that day as its animating spirit—its essence, its vitality. You can no more cut it out and separate it, than you can extract from Wordsworth his conception of nature, or from Swift his common sense. And it is of the subtlest kind. It has little in common with the rough disputation of the English deist, or the perplexing learning of the German theologian; but works with a tool more insinuating than either. It is, in truth, but the spirit of the world, which does not argue, but assume; which does not so much elaborate as hint; which does not examine, but suggest. With the traditions of the church it contrasts traditions of its own; its technicalities are *bon sens, l'usage du monde, le fanatisme,*

l'enthousiasme; to high hopes, noble sacrifices, awful lives, it opposes quiet ease, skilful comfort, placid calm, polished indifference. Old as transubstantiation may be, it is not older than Horace and Lucian. Lord Byron, in the well-known lines, has coupled the names of the two literary exiles on the Leman Lake. The page of Voltaire could not but remind Gibbon that the scepticism from which he had revolted was compatible with literary eminence and European fame—gave a piquancy to ordinary writing—was the very expression of caustic caution and gentlemanly calm.

The grave and erudite habits of Gibbon soon developed themselves. Independently of these abstruse theological disputations, he spent many hours daily—rising early and reading carefully—on classical and secular learning. He was not, however, wholly thus engrossed. There was in the neighbourhood of Lausanne a certain Mademoiselle Curchod; a studious and cultivated, it might almost be said a rational damsel. She showed this peculiar quality in her taste. To form an attachment to the Roman Empire is a difficult attainment for any young woman; but Mademoiselle Curchod went much further than a sentimental appreciation of the Decline and Fall, she professed to feel real affection for a grave and lumbering banker—M. Necker, afterwards the slow premier in a quick revolution—the author of various financial treatises, French sums, and tedious theories, to which this Genevese beauty, however, devoted much of her attention. But this was in a later time: Gibbon was, it seems, her first love;—history on Mondays, finance only on Tuesdays, appears to have been the rule of that well-regulated intellect. The feelings of Gibbon, it can hardly be supposed, were likely to do him any harm. However, there was an intimacy, a flirtation, an engagement—when it suddenly struck one or the other that they neither of them had any money. That the young lady should procure any seems to have been out of the question; and Gibbon, "taking," what Mr. James often terms "the initiative that becomes a man," wrote to his father. The reply was unfavourable. Gibbon's mother was dead; Mr. Gibbon senior was married again; and even in other circumstances would have been scarcely ready to encourage a romantic engagement to a lady with nothing. She spoke no English, too, and marriage with a person speaking only French was then regarded as a most unnatural event; forbidden, not indeed by the literal law of the church, but by those higher instinctive principles of our nature, to which the bluntest own obedience. No father could be expected to violate at once pecuniary duties and patriotic principles. Mr. Gibbon senior forbade the match. The young lady does not seem to have been quite ready to relinquish all hope;

but she had shown a grave taste, and fixed her affections on a sound and cold mind. "I sighed," narrates the historian, "as a lover; but I obeyed as a son." "I have seen," says M. Suard, "the letter in which Gibbon communicated to Mademoiselle Curchod the opposition of his father to their marriage. The first pages are tender and melancholy, as might be expected from an unhappy lover; the latter become by degrees calm and reasonable; and the letter concludes with these words: *C'est pourquoi, mademoiselle, j'ai l'honneur d'être votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur, Edward Gibbon.*" Her father died soon afterwards, and "she retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother;" but the tranquil disposition of her historical admirer preserved him from any romantic display of sympathy and fidelity. He continued to study various readings in Cicero, as well as the passage of Hannibal over the Alps; and with these affectionate resources set sentiment at defiance. Yet thirty years later the lady, then the wife of the most conspicuous man in Europe, was able to suggest useful reflections to an aged bachelor, obscurely and slightly dreaming of a superannuated marriage: "Gardez-vous, monsieur, de former un de ces liens tardifs: le mariage qui rend heureux dans l'age mûr, c'est celui qui fut contracté dans la jeunesse. Alors seulement la réunion est parfaite, les goûts se communiquent, les sentimens se répandent, les idées deviennent communes, les facultés intellectuelles se modèlent mutuellement. Toute la vie est double, et toute la vie est une prolongation de la jeunesse; car les impressions de l'ame commandent aux yeux, et la beauté qui n'est plus conserve encore son empire; mais pour vous, monsieur, dans toute la vigueur de la pensée, lorsque toute l'existence est décidée, l'on ne pourroit sans un miracle trouver une femme digne de vous; et une association d'un genre imparfait rappelle toujours la statue d'Horace, qui joint à une belle tête le corps d'un stupide poisson. Vous êtes marié avec la gloire." She was then a cultivated and instructed French lady, giving an account of the reception of the Decline and Fall at Paris, and expressing rather peculiar ideas on the style of Tacitus. The world had come round to her side, and she explains to her old lover rather well her happiness with M. Necker.

After living nearly five years at Lausanne, Gibbon returned to England. Continental residence has made a great alteration in many Englishmen; but few have undergone so complete a metamorphosis as Edward Gibbon. He left his own country a hot-brained and ill-taught youth, willing to sacrifice friends and expectations for a superstitious and half-known creed; he returned a cold and accomplished man, master of many accurate

ideas, little likely to hazard any coin for any faith: already, it is probable, inclined in secret to a cautious scepticism; placing thereby, as it were, upon a system the frigid prudence and unventuring incredulity congenial to his character. His change of character changed his position among his relatives. His father, he says, met him as a friend; and they continued thenceforth on a footing of "easy intimacy." Especially after the little affair of Mademoiselle Curchod, and the "very sensible view he took in that instance of the matrimonial relation," there can be but little question that Gibbon was justly regarded as a most safe young man, singularly prone to large books, and a little too fond of French phrases and French ideas; yet with a great feeling of common sense, and a wise preference of permanent money to transitory sentiment. His father allowed him a moderate, and but a moderate income, which he husbanded with great affection, and only voluntarily expended in the purchase and acquisition of serious volumes. He lived for many years, till his father's death and afterwards, an externally idle but really studious life, varied by tours in France and Italy; the toils of which, though not in description very formidable, somewhat sorely tried a sedentary habit and rather corpulent body. The only English avocation which he engaged in was, oddly enough, war. It does not seem the most likely in this pacific country, nor does he seem exactly the man for *la grande guerre;* but so it was; and the fact is an example of a really Anglican invention. The English have discovered pacific war. We may not be able to kill people as well as the French, or fit out and feed distant armaments as neatly as they do; but we are unrivalled at a quiet armament here at home which never kills any body, and never wants to be sent any where. A "constitutional militia" is a beautiful example of the mild efficacy of civilisation, which can convert even the "great manslaying profession" (as Carlyle calls it) into a quiet and dining association. Into this force Gibbon was admitted; and immediately, contrary to his anticipations, and very much against his will, was called out for permanent duty. The hero of the *corps* was a certain dining Sir Thomas, who used at the end of each new bottle to announce with increasing joy how much soberer he had become. What his fellow-officers thought of Gibbon's French predilections and large volumes it is not difficult to conjecture; and he on his side complains bitterly of the interruption to his studies. However, his easy composed nature soon made itself at home; his polished tact partially concealed from the "mess" his recondite pursuits, and he contrived to make the Hampshire armament of classical utility. "I read," he says, "the Analysis of Cæsar's Campaign in Africa. Every motion of that great general is

laid open with a critical sagacity. A complete military history of his campaigns would do almost as much honour to M. Guichardt as to Cæsar. This finished the *Mémoires*, which gave me a much clearer notion of ancient tactics than I ever had before. Indeed, my own military knowledge was of some service to me, as I am well acquainted with the modern discipline and exercise of a battalion. So that though much inferior to M. Folard and M. Guichardt, who had seen service, I am a much better judge than Salmasius, Casaubon, or Lipsius; mere scholars, who perhaps had never seen a battalion under arms."

The real occupation of Gibbon, as this quotation might suggest, was his reading; and this was of a peculiar sort. There are many kinds of readers, and each has a sort of perusal suitable to his kind. There is the voracious reader, like Dr. Johnson, who extracts with grasping appetite the large features, the gross essence of a trembling publication, and rejects the rest with contempt and disregard. There is the subtle reader, who pursues with fine attention the most imperceptible and delicate ramifications of an interesting topic, marks slight traits, notes changing manners, has a keen eye for the character of his author, is minutely attentive to every prejudice and awake to every passion, watches syllables and waits on words, is alive to the light air of nice associations which float about every subject—the motes in the bright sunbeam—the delicate gradations of the passing shadows. There is the stupid reader, who prefers dull books—is generally to be known by his disregard of small books and English books, and likes masses in modern Latin, *Grævius de torpore mirabili; Horrificus de gravitate sapientiæ*. But Gibbon was not of any of these classes. He was what common people would call a matter-of-fact, and philosophers now-a-days a *positive* reader. No disciple of M. Comte could attend more strictly to precise and provable phenomena. His favourite points are those which can be weighed and measured. Like the dull reader, he had perhaps a preference for huge books in unknown tongues; but, on the other hand, he wished those books to contain real and accurate information. He liked the firm earth of positive knowledge. His fancy was not flexible enough for exquisite refinement, his imagination too slow for light and wandering literature; but he had no taste for dullness in itself, and had a prompt acumen for serious eloquence. Thus "the author of the Adventurer, No. 127 (Mr. Joseph Warton, concealed under the signature of Z), concludes his ingenious parallel of the ancients and moderns by the following remark: 'That age will never again return, when a Pericles, after walking with Plato in a portico built by Phidias and painted by Apelles, might repair to hear a pleading of

Demosthenes or a tragedy of Sophocles.' It will never return, because it never existed. Pericles (who died in the fourth year of the LXXXIXth Olympiad. ant. Ch. 429, Dio. Sic. l. xii. 46) was confessedly the patron of Phidias, and the contemporary of Sophocles; but he could enjoy no very great pleasure in the conversation of Plato, who was born the same year that he himself died (Diogenes Laertius in Platone, v. Stanley's History of Philosophy, p. 154). The error is still more extraordinary with regard to Apelles and Demosthenes, since both the painter and the orator survived Alexander the Great, whose death is above a century posterior to that of Pericles (in 323). And indeed, though Athens was the seat of every liberal art from the days of Themistocles to those of Demetrius Phalereus, yet no particular era will afford Mr. Warton the complete synchronism he seems to wish for; as tragedy was deprived of her famous triumvirate before the arts of philosophy and eloquence had attained the perfection which they soon after received from the hands of Plato, Aristotle, and Demosthenes."

And wonderful is it for what Mr. Hallam calls "the languid students of our present age" to turn over the journal of his daily studies. It is true, it seems to have been revised by himself; and so great a narrator would group facts nicely with which he was so familiar; but allowing any discount (if we may use such a mean word about a noble being) for the skilful art of the impressive historian, there will yet remain in the *Extraits de mon Journal* a wonderful monument of learned industry. You may open any where. "*Dissertation on the Medal of Smyrna,* by M. de Boze: replete with erudition and taste; containing curious researches on the pre-eminence of the cities of Asia.—*Researches on the Polypus,* by Mr. Trembley. A new world: throwing light on physics, but darkening metaphysics.—Vegetius's *Institutions.* This writer on tactics has good general notions; but his particular account of the Roman discipline is deformed by confusion and anachronisms." Or, "I this day began a very considerable task, which was, to read Cluverius' *Italia Antiqua* in two volumes folio, Leyden 1624, Elzevirs;" and it appears he did read it as well as begin it, which is the point where most enterprising men would have failed. From the time of his residence at Lausanne his Latin scholarship had been sound and good; and the best part of his studies was directed to the illustration of the best Roman authors; but it is curious to find on the 16th of August 1761, after his return to England, and when he was twenty-four years old, the following extract: "I have at last finished the Iliad. As I undertook it to improve myself in the Greek language, which I had totally neglected for some years past, and to which I never applied myself with a

proper attention, I must give a reason why I began with Homer, and that contrary to Le Clerc's advice. I had two: 1st, As Homer is the most ancient Greek author (excepting perhaps Hesiod) who is now extant; and as he was not only the poet, but the lawgiver, the theologian, the historian, and the philosopher, of the ancients, every succeeding writer is full of quotations from, or allusions to, his writings, which it would be difficult to understand without a previous knowledge of them. In this situation, was it not natural to follow the ancients themselves, who always began their studies by the perusal of Homer? 2dly, No writer ever treated such a variety of subjects. As every part of civil, military, or economical life is introduced into his poems, and as the simplicity of his age allowed him to call every thing by its proper name, almost the whole compass of the Greek tongue is comprised in Homer. I have so far met with the success I hoped for, that I have acquired a great facility in reading the language, and treasured up a very great stock of words. What I have rather neglected is, the grammatical construction of them, and especially the many various inflexions of the verbs. In order to acquire that dry but necessary branch of knowledge, I propose bestowing some time every morning on the perusal of the *Greek Grammar of Port Royal*, as one of the best extant. I believe that I read nearly one-half of Homer like a mere schoolboy, not enough master of the words to elevate myself to the poetry. The remainder I read with a good deal of care and criticism, and made many observations on them. Some I have inserted here; for the rest I shall find a proper place. Upon the whole, I think that Homer's few faults (for some he certainly has) are lost in the variety of his beauties. I expected to have finished him long before. The delay was owing partly to the circumstances of my way of life and avocations, and partly to my own fault; for while every one looks on me as a prodigy of application, I know myself how strong a propensity I have to indolence." Posterity will confirm the contemporary theory that he was a "prodigy" of steady study. Those who know what the Greek language is, how much of the Decline and Fall depends on Greek authorities, how few errors the keen criticism of divines and scholars has been able to detect in his use of them, will be best able to appreciate the patient every-day labour which could alone repair the early neglect of so difficult an attainment.

It is odd how little Gibbon wrote, at least for the public, in early life. More than twenty-two years elapsed from his first return from Lausanne to the appearance of the first volume of his great work, and in that long interval his only important publication, if it can indeed be so called, was a French essay,

Sur l'Etude de la Littérature, which contains some sensible remarks, and shows much regular reading; but which is on the whole a "conceivable treatise," and would be wholly forgotten if it had been written by any one else. It was little read in England, and must have been a serious difficulty to his friends in the militia; but the Parisians read it, or said they had read it, which is more in their way, and the fame of being a French author was a great aid to him in foreign society. It flattered, indeed, the French *literati* more than any one can now fancy. The French had then the idea that it was uncivilised to speak any other language, and the notion of *writing* any other seemed quite a *bêtise.* By a miserable misfortune you might not know French, but at least you could conceal it assiduously; white paper any how might go unsoiled; posterity at least should not hear of such ignorance. The Parisian was to be the universal tongue. And it did not seem absurd, especially to those only slightly acquainted with foreign countries at all, that they might be in part successful. Political eminence had given their language a diplomatic supremacy. There was no German literature at all; Italy had ceased to produce important books. There was only England left to dispute the literary despotism; and such an attempt as Gibbon's was a peculiarly acceptable flattery, for it seemed as if her most cultivated men were beginning to abandon their own tongue, and to write like other nations in the cosmopolitan *lingua franca.* A few far-seeing observers, however, even then contemplated the train of events which at the present day give such a preponderating influence to our own writers, and make it an arduous matter even to explain the conceivableness of the French ambition. Of all men living then or since, David Hume was the most likely from prejudice and habit to take an unfavourable view of English literary influence; he had more literary fame than he deserved in France and less in England; yet his cold and discriminating intellect at once emancipated him from the sophistries which imposed on those less watchful. He wrote to Gibbon, "I have only one objection, derived from the language in which it is written. Why do you compose in French, and carry faggots into the wood, as Horace says with regard to Romans who wrote in Greek? I grant that you have a like motive to those Romans, and adopt a language much more generally diffused than your native tongue; but have you not remarked the fate of those two ancient languages in the following ages? The Latin, though then less celebrated and confined to more narrow limits, has in some measure outlived the Greek, and is now more generally understood by men of letters. Let the French, therefore, triumph in the present diffusion of their tongue. Our solid and increasing establishments in Ame-

rica, where we need less dread the inundation of barbarians, promise a superior stability and duration to the English language." The cool sceptic was correct. The great breeding people have gone out and multiplied; colonies in every clime attest our success; French is the *patois* of Europe; English is the language of the world.

Gibbon took the advice of his remarkable friend, and prepared himself for the composition of his great work in English. His studies were destined, however, to undergo an interruption. "Yesterday morning," he wrote to a friend, "about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend Mr. Eliot was soon introduced. After some idle conversation, he told me that if I was desirous of being in parliament, he had an independent seat very much at my service." The borough was Liskeard; and the epithet independent is, of course, ironical, Mr. Eliot being himself the constituency of that place. The offer was accepted, and one of the most learned of members of parliament took his seat.

The political life of Gibbon is briefly described. He was a supporter of Lord North. That well-known statesman was, in the most exact sense, a representative man,—although representative of the very class of persons most out of favour with the transcendental thinkers, who invented that name. Germans deny it, but it is true that in every country common opinions are very common. In all lands, both now and of old, there exists the easy and comfortable mass; quiet, sagacious, short-sighted,—such as the Jews whom Rabshakeh tempted by their vine and their fig-tree, such as the English with their snug dining-room and after-dinner nap, domestic happiness and Bullo coal; sensible, solid, practical men, without stretching irritable reason, but with a placid supine instinct; without originality and without folly; judicious in their dealings, respected in the world; wanting little, sacrificing nothing; good-tempered people in a word, "caring for nothing until they are themselves hurt." Lord North was of this class. You could hardly make him angry. "No doubt," tapping his fat sides, "I am that odious thing a minister; and I believe other people wish they were so too." Profound people look deeply for the maxims of his policy; and it being on the surface, of course they fail to find it. He did not what the mind but what the *body* of the community wanted to have done; he appealed to the real people, the large English commonplace herd. His abilities were great; and with them he did what people with no abilities wished to do, and could not do. Lord Brougham has just published his Letters to the King, showing that which partial extracts had made known before, that he was quite opposed to the war he was carrying on; was convinced it could

not succeed; hardly, in fact, wished it might. Why did he carry it on? *Vox populi*, the voice of the well-dressed wigs, commanded it to be done; and he cheerfully sacrificed American people, who were nothing to him, to English, who were something, and a king, who was much. Gibbon was the very man to support such a ruler. His historical writings have given him a posthumous eminence; but in his own time he was doubtless thought a sensible safe man, of ordinary thoughts and intelligible actions. To do him justice, he did not pretend to be a hero. "You know," he wrote to his friend Deyverdun, "que je suis entré au parliament sans patriotisme, sans ambition, et que toutes mes vues se bornoient à la place commode et honnête d'un *lord of trade*." Wise in his generation was written on his brow. He quietly and gently supported the policy of his time.

Even, however, amid the fatigue of parliamentary attendance, —the fatigue, in fact, of attending a nocturnal and oratorical club, where you met the best people, who could not speak, as well as a few of the worst, who always *would*,—Gibbon's history made much progress. The first volume, a quarto, one-sixth of the whole, was published in the spring of 1776, and at once raised his fame to a high point. Ladies actually read it—read about Bœtica and Tarraconensis, the Roman legions and the tribunitian powers. Grave scholars wrote dreary commendations. "The first impression," he writes, "was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand; and my bookseller's property was twice invaded by the pirates of Dublin. My book was on every table"—tables must have been rather few in that age—"and almost on every toilette; the historian was crowned by the taste or fashion of the day; nor was the general voice disturbed by the barking of any profound critic." The noise penetrated deep into the unlearned classes. Mr. Sheridan, who never read any thing "on principle," said that the crimes of Warren Hastings surpassed any thing to be found in the "correct sentences of Tacitus or the *luminous* page of Gibbon." Some one seems to have been struck with the jet of learning, and questioned the great wit. "I said," he replied, "voluminous."

History, it is said, is of no use; at least a great critic, who is understood to have in the press a very elaborate work in that kind, not long since seemed to allege that writings of this sort did not establish a theory of the universe, and were therefore of no avail. But whatever may be the use of this sort of composition in itself and abstractedly, it is certainly of great use relatively and to literary men. Consider the position of a person of that species. He sits beside a library-fire, with nice white paper,

a good pen, a capital style, and nothing to describe; of course he is an able man, and of course has an active intellect, beside wonderful culture; but still one cannot always have original ideas. Every day cannot be an era; a train of new speculation very often will not be found; and how dull it is to make it your business to write, to stay by yourself in a room to write, and then to have nothing to say! It is dreary work mending seven pens, and waiting for a theory to "turn up." What a gain if something would happen! then one could describe it. Something has happened, and that something is history. On this account, since a remarkably grave Greek discovered this plan for a serious immortality, a series of accomplished men have seldom been found wanting to derive a literary capital from their active and barbarous kindred. Perhaps when a Visigoth broke a head, he thought that that was all. Not so; he was making history; Gibbon has written it down.

The manner of writing history is as characteristic of the narrator as the actions are of the persons who are related to have performed them; often much more so. It may be generally defined as a view of one age taken by another; a picture of a series of men and women painted by one of another series. Of course, this definition seems to exclude contemporary history; but if we look into the matter carefully, is there such a thing? What are all the best and most noted works that claim the title — memoirs, scraps, materials — composed by men of like passions with the people they speak of, involved it may be in the events they speak of, and therefore describing them with the partiality and narrowness of an eager actor; or even worse, by men far apart from them in a monkish solitude, familiar with the lettuces of the convent-garden, but hearing only faint dim murmurs of the great transactions which they slowly jot down in the barren chronicle: these are not to be named in the same short breath, or included in the same narrow word, with the equable, poised, philosophic narrative of the retrospective historian. In the great histories there are two topics of interest— the man as a type of the age in which he lives,—the events and manners of the age he is describing; very often almost all the interest is the contrast of the two.

You should do every thing, said Lord Chesterfield, in minuet time. It was in that time that Gibbon wrote his history, and such was the manner of the age. You fancy him in a suit of flowered velvet, with a bag and sword, wisely smiling, composedly rounding his periods. You seem to see the grave bows, the formal politeness, the finished deference. You perceive the minuetic action accompanying the words: "Give," it would say, "Augustus a chair: Zenobia, the humblest of your slaves:

Odoacer, permit me to correct the defect in your attire." As the slap-dash sentences of a rushing critic express the hasty impatience of modern manners, so the deliberate emphasis, the slow acumen, the steady argument, the impressive narration bring before us what is now a tradition, the picture of the correct eighteenth-century gentleman, who never failed in a measured politeness, partly because it was due in propriety towards others, and partly because from his own dignity it was due most obviously to himself.

And not only is this true of style, but may be extended to other things also. There is no one of the many literary works produced in the eighteenth century more thoroughly characteristic of it than Gibbon's history. The special characteristic of that age is its clinging to the definite and palpable; it had a taste beyond every thing for what it called solid information. In literature the period may be defined as that in which men ceased to write for students, and had not begun to write for women. In the present day no one can take up any book intended for general circulation, without clearly seeing that the writer supposes most of his readers will be ladies or young men; and he, in proporton to his judgment, attends to their taste accordingly. Two or three hundred years ago books were written for professed and systematic students,—the class the fellows of colleges were designed to be, who used to go on studying them all their lives. Between these two, there was a time in which the more marked class of literary consumers were strong-headed practical men. Education had not become so general, or so feminine, as to make the present style—what is called the "brilliant style"—at all necessary; but there was enough culture to make the demand of common diffused persons more effectual than that of special and secluded scholars. A book-buying public had arisen of sensible men, who would not endure the awful folio style in which the schoolmen wrote. From peculiar causes, too, the business of that age was perhaps more free from the hurry and distraction which disable so many of our practical men at the present time from reading. You accordingly see in the books of the last century what is called a masculine tone; a firm, strong, perspicuous narration of matter of fact, a plain argument, a contempt for every thing which distinct definite people cannot entirely and thoroughly comprehend. There is no more solid book in the world than Gibbon's history. Only consider the chronology. It begins before the year ONE and goes down to the year 1453, and is a schedule or series of schedules of important events during that time. Scarcely any fact deeply affecting European civilisation is wholly passed over, and the great majority are elaborately recounted. Laws,

dynasties, churches, barbarians, appear and disappear. Every thing changes; the old world—the classical civilisation of form and definition—passes away, a new world of free spirit and inward growth emerges; between the two lie a mixed weltering interval of trouble and confusion, when every body hates every body, and the historical student leads a life of skirmishes, is oppressed with broils and feuds. All through this long period Gibbon's history goes with steady consistent pace; like a Roman legion through a troubled country—*hæret pede pes;* up hill and down hill, through marsh and thicket, through Goth or Parthian—the firm defined array passes forward—a type of order and an emblem of civilisation. Whatever may be the defects of Gibbon's history, none can deny him a proud precision and a style in marching order.

Another characteristic of the eighteenth century is its taste for dignified pageantry. What an existence was that of Versailles! How gravely admirable to see the *grand monarque* shaved, and dressed, and powdered; to look on and watch a great man carefully amusing himself with dreary trifles. Or do we not even now possess an invention of that age—the great eighteenth-century footman, still in the costume of his era, with dignity and powder, vast calves and noble mien? What a world it must have been when all men looked like that! Go and gaze with rapture at the footboard of a carriage, and say, Who would not obey a premier with such an air? Grave, tranquil, decorous pageantry is a part, as it were, of the essence of the last age. There is nothing more characteristic of Gibbon. A kind of pomp pervades him. He is never out of livery. He ever selects for narration those themes which look most like a levee: grave chamberlains seem to stand throughout; life is a vast ceremony, the historian at once the dignitary and the scribe.

The very language of Gibbon shows these qualities. Its majestic march has been the admiration—its rather pompous cadence the sport of all perusers. It has the greatest merit of an historical style; it is always going on; you feel no doubt of its continuing in motion. Many narrators of the reflective class, Sir Archibald Alison for example, fail in this; your constant feeling is, "Ah! he is pulled up; he is going to be profound; he never will go on again." But at the same time, the manner of the Decline and Fall is about the last which should be recommended for strict imitation. It is not a style in which you can tell the truth. A monotonous writer is suited only to monotonous matter. Truth is of various kinds—grave, solemn, dignified, petty, low, ordinary; and a historian who has to tell the truth must be able to tell what is vulgar as well as what is great, what is little as well as what is amazing. Gibbon is at fault here. He *cannot* mention

Asia *Minor*. The petty order of sublunary matters; the common gross existence of ordinary people; the necessary littlenesses of necessary life, are little suited to his sublime narrative. Men on the *Times* feel this acutely; it is most difficult at first to say many things in the huge imperial manner. And after all you cannot tell every thing. "How, sir," asked a reviewer of Sydney Smith's life, "do you say a 'good fellow' in print?" "Mr.———," replied the editor, "you should not say it at all." Gibbon was aware of this rule: he omits what does not suit him; and the consequence is, that though he has selected the most various of historical topics, he scarcely gives you an idea of variety. The ages change, but the varnish of the narration is the same.

It is not unconnected with this fault that Gibbon gives us but an indifferent description of individual character. People seem a good deal alike. The cautious scepticism of his cold intellect, which disinclined him to every extreme, depreciates great virtues and extenuates great vices; and we are left with a tame neutral character, capable of nothing extraordinary,—hateful, as the saying is, "both to God and to the enemies of God."

A great point in favour of Gibbon is the existence of his history. Some great historians seem likely to fail here. A good judge was asked which he preferred, Macaulay's *History of England* or Lord Mahon's. "Why," he replied, "you observe Lord Mahon has written his history; and by what I see Macaulay's will be written not only for but *among* posterity." Practical people have little idea of the practical ability required to write a large book, and especially a large history. Long before you get to the pen, there is an immensity of pure business; heaps of material are strewn every where; but they lie in disorder, unread, uncatalogued, unknown. It seems a dreary waste of life to be analysing, indexing, extracting works and passages, in which one per cent of the contents are interesting, and not half of that per centage will ultimately appear in the flowing narrative. As an accountant takes up a bankrupt's books filled with confused statements of ephemeral events, the disorderly record of unprofitable speculations, and charges this to that head, and that to this, —estimates earnings, specifies expenses, demonstrates failures; so the great narrator, going over the scattered annalists of extinct ages, groups and divides, notes and combines, until from a crude mass of darkened fragments there emerges a clear narrative, a concise account of the result and upshot of the whole. In this art Gibbon was a master. The laborious research of German scholarship, the keen eye of theological zeal, a steady criticism of eighty years, have found few faults of detail. The account has been worked right, the proper authorities consulted,

an accurate judgment formed, the most telling incidents selected. Perhaps experience shows that there is something English in this talent. The Germans are more elaborate in single monographs; but they seem to want the business-ability to work out a complicated narrative, to combine a long whole. The French are neat enough, and the style is very quick; but then it is difficult to believe the facts; the account on its face seems too plain, and no true Parisian ever was an antiquary. The great classical histories published in this country in our own time show that the talent is by no means extinct; and they likewise show, what is also evident, that this kind of composition is easier with respect to ancient than with respect to modern times. The barbarians burned the books; and though all the historians abuse them for it, it is quite evident that in their hearts they are greatly rejoiced. If the books had existed, they would have had to read them. Mr. Macaulay has to peruse every book printed with long ſ's; and it is no use after all; somebody will find some stupid MS., an old account-book of an "ingenious gentleman," and with five entries therein destroy a whole hypothesis. But Gibbon was exempt from this; he could count the books the splendid Goths bequeathed; and when he had mastered them he might pause. Still it is no light matter, as any one who looks at the books—awful folios in the grave Bodleian—will most certainly credit and believe. And he did it all himself; he never showed his book to any friend, or asked any one to help him in the accumulating work, not even in the correction of the press. "Not a sheet," he says, "has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and printer; the faults and the merits are exclusively my own." And he wrote most of it with one pen, which must certainly have grown erudite towards the end.

The nature of his authorities clearly shows what the nature of Gibbon's work is. History may be roughly divided into universal and particular; the first being the narrative of events affecting the whole human race, at least the main historical nations, the narrative of whose fortunes is the story of civilisation; and the latter being the relation of events relating to one or a few particular nations only. Universal history, it is evident, comprises great areas of space and long periods of time; you cannot have a series of events visibly operating on all great nations without time for their gradual operation, and without tracking them in succession through the various regions of their power. There is no instantaneous transmission in historical causation; a long interval is required for universal effects. It follows, that universal history necessarily partakes of the character of a summary. You cannot recount the cumbrous annals

of long epochs without condensation, selection, and omission; the narrative, when shortened within the needful limits, becomes concise and general. What it gains in time, according to the mechanical phrase, it loses in power. The particular history, confined within narrow limits, can show us the whole contents of these limits, explain its features of human interest, recount in graphic detail all its interesting transactions, touch the human heart with the power of passion, instruct the mind with patient instances of accurate wisdom. The universal is confined to a dry enumeration of superficial transactions; no action can have all its details; the canvas is so crowded that no figure has room to display itself effectively. From the nature of the subject, Gibbon's history is of the latter class; the sweep of the narrative is so wide; the decline and fall of the Roman empire being in some sense the most universal event which has ever happened,—being, that is, the historical incident which has most affected all civilised men, and the very existence and form of civilisation itself,—it is evident that we must look rather for a comprehensive generality than a telling minuteness of delineation. The history of a thousand years does not admit the pictorial detail which a Scott or a Macaulay can accumulate on the history of a hundred. Gibbon has done his best to avoid the dryness natural to such an attempt. He inserts as much detail as his limits will permit; selects for more full description striking people and striking transactions; brings together at a single view all that relates to single topics; above all, by a regular advance of narration, never ceases to imply the regular progress of events and the steady course of time. None can deny the magnitude of such an effort. After all, however, these are merits of what is technically termed composition, and are analogous to those excellencies in painting or sculpture that are more respected by artists than appreciated by the public at large. The fame of Gibbon is highest among writers; those especially who have studied for years particular periods included in his theme (and how many those are; for in the East and West he has set his mark on all that is great for ten centuries!) acutely feel and admiringly observe how difficult it would be to say so much, and leave so little untouched; to compress so many telling points; to present in so few words so apt and embracing a narrative of the whole. But the mere unsophisticated reader scarcely appreciates this; he is rather awed than delighted; or rather, perhaps, he appreciates it for a little while, then is tired by the roll and glare; then on any chance—the creaking of an organ, or the stirring of a mouse—in time of temptation he falls away. It has been said, the way to answer all objections to Milton is to take down the book and read him; the way to reverence Gibbon

is not to read him at all, but look at him, from outside, in the bookcase, and think how much there is inside; what a course of events, what a muster-roll of names, what a steady solemn sound! You will not like to take the book down; but you will think how much you could be delighted if you would.

It may be well, though it can be only in the most cursory manner, to examine the respective treatment of the various elements in this vast whole. The history of the Decline and Fall may be roughly and imperfectly divided into the picture of the Roman empire — the narrative of barbarian incursions — the story of Constantinople: and some few words may be hastily said on each.

The picture,—for so, from its apparent stability when contrasted with the fluctuating character of the later period, we may call it,—which Gibbon has drawn of the united empire has immense merit. The organisation of the imperial system is admirably dwelt on; the manner in which the old republican institutions were apparently retained, but really altered, is compendiously explained; the mode in which the imperial will was transmitted to and carried out in remote provinces is distinctly displayed. But though the mechanism is admirably delineated, the dynamical principle, the original impulse, is not made clear. You never feel you are reading about the Romans. Yet no one denies their character to be most marked. Poets and orators have striven for the expression of it:

> "Leave gold and myrrh and jewels,
> Rich table and soft bed,
> To them who of man's seed are born,
> Whom woman's milk hath fed.
> Thou wast not made for lucre,
> For pleasure, nor for rest,—
> Thou that art sprung from the War-god's loins,
> And hast tugged at the she-wolf's breast.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Thy nurse will bear no master,
> Thy nurse will bear no load;
> And woe to them that shear her,
> And woe to them that goad.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> And such as is the War-god,
> The author of thy line,
> And such as she who suckled thee,
> Even such be thou and thine."

What a refreshment from the cold serenity of the Decline and Fall, where every man seems a statue, and every institution a formula! Mr. Macaulay has been similarly criticised; it has

been said, that notwithstanding his great dramatic power, and wonderful felicity in the selection of events on which to exert it, he yet never makes us feel that we are reading about Englishmen. The coarse clay of our English nature *cannot* be represented in so fine a style. In the same way, and to a much greater extent (for this is perhaps an unthankful criticism, if we compare Macaulay's description of any body with that of any other historian), Gibbon is chargeable with neither expressing nor feeling the essence of the people concerning whom he is writing. There was, in truth, in the Roman people a warlike fanaticism, a puritanical essence, an interior, latent, restrained, enthusiastic religion, which was utterly alien to the cold scepticism of the narrator. Of course he was conscious of it. He indistinctly felt that at least there was something he did not like; but he could not realise or sympathise with it without a change of heart and nature. The old Pagan has a sympathy with the religion of enthusiasm far above the reach of the modern Epicurean.

It may indeed be said, on behalf of Gibbon, that the old Roman character was in its decay, and that only so slight traces of it were remaining in the age of Augustus and the Antonines that it is no particular defect in him to leave it unnoticed. Yet though the intensity of its nobler peculiarities was on the wane, many a vestige would perhaps have been apparent to so learned an eye, if his temperament and disposition had been prone to seize upon and search for them. Nor is there any adequate appreciation of the compensating element, of the force which really held society together, of the fresh air of the Illyrian hills, of that army which, evermore recruited from northern and rugged populations, doubtless brought into the very centre of a degraded society the healthy simplicity of a vital if barbarous religion.

It is no wonder that such a mind should have looked with displeasure on primitive Christianity. The whole of his treatment of that topic has been discussed by many pens, and three generations of ecclesiastical scholars have illustrated it with their emendations. Yet if we turn over this, the latest and most elaborate edition, containing all the important criticisms of Milman and of Guizot, we shall be surprised to find how few instances of definite exact error such a scrutiny has been able to find out. As Paley, with his strong sagacity, at once remarked, the subtle error rather lies hid in the sinuous folds than is directly apparent on the surface of the polished style. Who, said the shrewd archdeacon, can refute a sneer? And yet even this is scarcely the exact truth. The objection of Gibbon is, in fact, an objection rather to religion than to Christianity; as has been said, he did not appreciate, and could not describe, the most

inward form of pagan piety; he objected to Christianity because it was the intensest of religions. We do not mean by this to charge Gibbon with any denial, any overt distinct disbelief in the existence of a supernatural Being. This would be very unjust; his cold composed mind had nothing in common with the Jacobinical outbreak of the next generation. He was no doubt a theist after the fashion of natural theology; nor was he devoid of more than scientific feeling; all constituted authorities struck him with emotion, all ancient ones with awe. If the Roman empire had descended to his time, how much he would have reverenced it! He had doubtless a great respect for the "First Cause;" it had all the titles to approbation; "it was not conspicuous," he would have said, "but it was potent." A sensitive decorum revolted from the jar of atheistic disputation. We have already described him *ad nauseam*. A sensible middle age in political life; a bachelor, not himself gay, but living with gay men; equable and secular; as Porson said, "never failing in natural feeling except when women were to be ravished and Christians to be martyred." His writings are in character. The essence of the far-famed fifteenth and sixteenth chapters is, in truth, but a description of unworldly events in the tone of this world, of awful facts in unmoved voice, of truths of the heart in the language of the eyes. The wary sceptic has not even committed himself to definite doubts. These celebrated chapters were in the first manuscript much longer, and were gradually reduced to their present size by excision and compression. Who can doubt that in their first form they were a clear, or comparatively clear expression of exact opinions on the Christian history, and that it was by a subsequent and elaborate process that they were reduced to their present and insidious obscurity. The process has been effectual. "Divest," says Dean Milman of the introduction to the fifteenth chapter, "this whole passage of the latent sarcasm betrayed by the whole of the subsequent dissertation, and it might commence a Christian history, written in the most Christian spirit of candour."

It is not for us here to go into any disquisition as to the comparative influence of the five earthly causes to whose secondary operation the specious historian ascribes the progress of Christianity. Weariness and disinclination forbid. There can be no question that the polity of the church, and the zeal of the converts, and other such things, did most materially conduce to the progress of the Gospel. But few will now attribute to these much of the effect. The real cause is the heaving of the mind after the truth. Troubled with the perplexities of time, weary with the vexation of ages, the spiritual faculty of man turns to the truth as the child turns to its mother. The

thirst of the soul was to be satisfied, the deep torture of the spirit to have rest. There was an appeal to those

> "High instincts, before which our mortal nature
> Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

The mind of man has an appetite for the truth.

> "Hence, in a season of calm weather,
> Though inland far we be,
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
> Which brought us hither,—
> Can in a moment travel thither,
> And see the children sport upon the shore,
> And hear the mighty voices rolling evermore."

All this was not exactly in Gibbon's way, and he does not seem to have been able to conceive that it was in any one else's. Why his chapters had given offence he could hardly make out. It actually seems that he hardly thought that other people believed more than he did. "We may be well assured," says he, of a sceptic of antiquity, "that a writer conversant with the world would never have ventured to expose the gods of his country to public ridicule, had they not been already the objects of secret contempt among the polished and enlightened orders of society." "Had I," he says of himself, "believed that the majority of English readers were so fondly attached even to the name and shadow, had I foreseen that the pious, the timid, and the prudent would feel, or would affect to feel, with such exquisite sensibility,—I might perhaps have softened the two invidious chapters, which would create many enemies and conciliate few friends." The state of belief at that time is a very large subject; but it is probable that in the cultivated cosmopolitan classes the continental scepticism was very rife; that among the hard-headed classes the rough spirit of English Deism had made much way. Though the mass of the people doubtless believed much as they now believe, yet it seems that the entire upper class was lazy and corrupt, and that there is truth in the picture of the modern divine: "The thermometer of the Church of England sunk to its lowest point in the first thirty years of the reign of George III. . . . In their preaching, nineteen clergymen out of twenty carefully abstained from dwelling upon Christian doctrines. Such topics exposed the preacher to the charge of fanaticism. Even the calm and sober Crabbe, who certainly never erred from excess of zeal, was stigmatised in those days as a methodist, because he introduced into his sermons the notion of future reward and punishment. An orthodox clergyman (they said) should be content to show his people the worldly advantage of good conduct, and to leave heaven and hell to the ranters. Nor can we wonder that such should have been the notions of country parsons, when, even by

those who passed for the supreme arbiters of orthodoxy and taste, the vapid rhetoric of Blair was thought the highest standard of Christian exhortation." It is among the excuses for Gibbon that he lived in such a world.

There are slight palliations also in the notions then prevalent of the primitive church. There was the Anglican theory, that it was a *via media*, the most correct of periods, that its belief is to be the standard, its institutions the model, its practice the test of subsequent ages. There was the notion, not formally drawn out, but diffused through and implied in a hundred books of evidences,—a notion in opposition to every probability, and utterly at variance with the New Testament,—that the first converts were sober, hard-headed, cultivated inquirers,—Watsons, Paleys, Priestleys, on a small scale; weighing evidence, analysing facts, suggesting doubts, dwelling on distinctions, cold in their dispositions, moderate in their morals, cautious in their creed. We now know that these were not they of whom the world was not worthy. It is now certain that the times of the first church were times of excitement; that great ideas falling on a mingled world were distorted by an untrained intellect, even in the moment in which they were received by a yearning heart; that strange confused beliefs, Millennarianism, Gnosticism, Ebionitism, were accepted, not merely by outlying obscure heretics, but in a measure, half-and-half, one notion more by one man, another more by his neighbour, confusedly and mixedly by the mass of Christians; that the appeal was not to the questioning thinking understanding, but to unheeding all-venturing emotion; to that lower class "from whom faiths ascend," and not to the cultivated and exquisite class by whom they are criticised; that fervid men never embraced a more exclusive creed; in a word, that you can say nothing favourable of the first Christians except that they *were* Christians. There is no "form nor comeliness" in them; no intellectual accomplishments, no caution in action, no discretion in understanding; there is no admirable quality except that, with whatever distortion, or confusion, or singularity, they at once accepted the great clear outline of belief in which to this day we live, move, and have our being. The offence of Gibbon is his disinclination to this simple essence; his excuse, the historical errors then prevalent as to the primitive Christians, the real defects so natural in their position, the false merits ascribed to them by writers who from one reason or another desired to treat them as "an authority."*

* Compare the description of a felicitous and admirable writer, "When we consider what is implied in such expressions as 'not many wise, not many learned were called' to the knowledge of the truth, we can scarcely avoid feeling that there must have been much in the early church which would have been distasteful

On the whole, therefore, it may be said of the first, and in some sense the most important part of Gibbon's work, that though he has given an elaborate outline of the framework of society, and described its detail with pomp and accuracy, yet that he has not comprehended or delineated its nobler essence, Pagan or Christian. Nor perhaps was it to be expected that he should, for he inadequately comprehended the dangers of the time; he thought it the happiest period the world has ever known; he would not have comprehended the remark, "To see the old world in its worst estate we turn to the age of the satirists and of Tacitus, when all the different streams of evil coming from east, west, north, south, the vices of barbarism and the vices of civilisation, remnants of ancient cults and the latest refinements of luxury and impurity, met and mingled on the banks of the Tiber. What could have been the state of society when Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Heliogabalus, were the rulers of the world? To a good man we should imagine that death itself would be more tolerable than the sight of such things coming upon the earth." So deep an ethical sensibility was not to be expected in the first century; nor is it strange when, after seventeen hundred years, we do not find it in their historian.

Space has failed us, and we must be unmeaningly brief. The

to us as men of education, much that must have worn the appearance of excitement and enthusiasm. Is the mean conventicle, looking almost like a private house, more like that first assembly of Christians in the large upper room, or the Catholic church, arrayed in all the glories of Christian art? Neither of them is altogether like in spirit, perhaps; but in externals the first. Is the dignified hierarchy that occupy the seats around the altar more like the multitude of first believers, or the lowly crowd that kneel upon the pavement? If we try to embody in the mind's eye the forms of the first teachers, and still more of their followers, we cannot help reading the true lesson, however great may be the illusions of poetry and art. Not St. Paul standing on Mars' Hill in the fulness of manly strength, as we have him in the cartoon of Raphael, is the true image, but such a one as he himself would glory in, whose bodily presence was weak and speech feeble, who had an infirmity in his flesh, and bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. And when we look at this picture full in the face, however we might by nature be inclined to turn aside from it, or veil its details in general language, we cannot deny that many things that accompany the religion of the uneducated now must also have accompanied the Gospel preached to the poor. There must have been, humanly speaking, spiritual delusions, where men lived so exclusively in the spiritual world; there were scenes which we know took place, such as St. Paul says would make the unbeliever think that they were mad. The best and holiest persons among the poor and ignorant are not entirely free from superstition according to the notions of the educated; at best they are apt to speak of religion in a manner not suited to our taste; they sing with a loud excited voice, they imagine themselves to receive divine oracles even about the humblest cares of life. Is not this, in externals at least, very like the appearance which the disciples must have presented who obeyed the apostle's injunction; 'Is any sad? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms'? Could our nerves have borne to witness 'the speaking with tongues,' or 'the administration of baptism,' or 'the love-feasts' as they probably existed in the early church?"—*Jowett, Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. ii. p. 199.

second head of Gibbon's history—the narrative of the barbarian invasions—has been recently criticised, on the ground that he scarcely enough explains the gradual but unceasing and inevitable manner in which the outer barbarians were affected by and assimilated to the civilisation of Rome. Mr. Congreve has well observed, that the impression which Gibbon's narrative is insensibly calculated to convey is, that there was little or no change in the state of the Germanic tribes between the time of Tacitus and the final invasion of the empire—a conclusion which is obviously incredible. To the general reader there will perhaps seem some indistinctness in this part of the work, nor is a free confused barbarism a congenial subject for an imposing and orderly pencil. He succeeds better in the delineation of the riding monarchies, if we may so term them, of the equestrian courts of Attila or Timour, in which the great scale, the concentrated power, the very enormity of the barbarism, give, so to speak, a shape to unshapeliness; impart, that is, a horrid dignity to horse-flesh and mare's milk, an imposing oneness to the vast materials of a crude barbarity. It is needless to say that no one would search Gibbon for an explanation of the reasons or feelings by which the northern tribes were induced to accept Christianity.

It is on the story of Constantinople that the popularity of Gibbon rests. The vast extent of the topic; the many splendid episodes it contains; its epic unity from the moment of its far-seeing selection by Constantine to its last fall; its position as the link between Europe and Asia; its continuous history; the knowledge that through all that time it was, as now, a diadem by the water-side, a lure to be snatched by the wistful barbarian, a marvel to the West, a prize for the North and for the East; —these, and such as these ideas, are congenial advantages to a style of pomp and grandeur. The East seems to require to be treated with a magnificence unsuitable to a colder soil. The nature of the events, too, is suitable to Gibbon's cursory imposing manner. It is the history of a form of civilisation, but without the power thereof; a show of splendour and vigour, but without bold life or interior reality. What an opportunity for an historian who loved the imposing pageantry and disliked the purer essence of existence! There were here neither bluff barbarians nor simple saints; there was nothing admitting of particular accumulated detail: we do not wish to know the interior of the stage; the imposing movements are all which should be seized. Some of the features are curious in relation to those of the historian's life; the clear accounts of the theological controversies, followed out with an appreciative minuteness so rare in a sceptic, are not disconnected with his early conversion to the scholastic church.

The brilliancy of the narrative reminds us of his enthusiasm for Arabic and the East; the minute description of a licentious epoch evinces the habit of a mind which, not being bold enough for the practice of license, took a pleasure in following its theory. There is no subject which combines so much of unity with so much of variety.

It is evident, therefore, where Gibbon's rank as an historian must finally stand. He cannot be numbered among the great painters of human nature, for he has no sympathy with the heart and passions of our race; he has no place among the felicitous describers of detailed life, for his subject was too vast for minute painting, and his style too uniform for a shifting scene. But he is entitled to a high—perhaps to a first place—among the orderly narrators of great events; the composed expositors of universal history; the tranquil artists who have endeavoured to diffuse a cold polish over the warm passions and desultory fortunes of mankind.

The life of Gibbon after the publication of his great work was not very complicated. During its composition he had withdrawn from Parliament and London to the studious retirement of Lausanne. Much eloquence has been expended on this voluntary exile, and it has been ascribed to the best and most profound motives. It is indeed certain that he liked a lettered solitude, preferred easy continental society, was not quite insensible to the charm of scenery, had a pleasure in returning to the haunts of his youth. Prosaic and pure history, however, must explain that he went abroad to *save*. Lord North had gone out of power. Mr. Burke, the Cobden of that era, had procured the abolition of the Lords of Trade; the private income of Gibbon was not equal to his notion of a bachelor London life. The same sum was, however, a fortune at Lausanne. Most things, he acknowledged, were as dear; but then he had not to buy so many things. Eight hundred a year placed him high in the social scale of the place. The inhabitants were gratified that a man of European reputation had selected their out-of-the-way town for the shrine of his time: he lived pleasantly and easily among easy pleasant people; a gentle hum of local admiration gradually arose, which yet lingers on the lips of erudite *laquais de place*. He still retains a fame unaccorded to any other historian; they speak of the "hôtel Gibbon:" there never was even an *estaminet* Tacitus, or a *café* Thucydides.

This agreeable scene, like many other agreeable scenes, was broken by a great thunderclap. The French revolution has disgusted many people; but perhaps it has never disgusted any one more than Gibbon. He had swept and garnished every thing about him. Externally he had made a neat little hermit-

age in a gentle social place; internally he had polished up a cold theory of life, sufficient for the guidance of a cold and polished man. Every thing seemed to be tranquil with him: the rigid must admit his decorum; the lax would not accuse him of rigour: he was of the world, and an elegant society naturally loved its own. On a sudden the hermitage was disturbed. No place was too calm for that excitement: scarcely any too distant for that uproar. The French war was a war of opinion, entering households, disturbing villages, dividing quiet friends. The Swiss took some of the infection. There was a not unnatural discord between the people of the Pays de Vaud and their masters the people of Berne. The letters of Gibbon are filled with invectives on the "Gallic barbarians" and panegyrics on Mr. Burke: military details, too, begin to abound—the peace of his retirement was at an end. It was an additional aggravation that the Parisians should do such things. It would not have seemed unnatural that northern barbarians—English, or other uncivilised nations—should break forth in rough riot or cruel license; but that the people of the most civilised of all capitals, speaking the sole dialect of polished life, enlightened with all the enlightenment then known, should be guilty of excesses unparalleled, unwitnessed, unheard of, was a vexing trial to one who had admired them for many years. The internal creed and belief of Gibbon was as much attacked by all this as were his external circumstances. He had spent his time, his life, his energy, in putting a polished gloss on human tumult, a sneering gloss on human piety; on a sudden human passion broke forth—the cold and polished world seemed to meet its end; the thin superficies of civilisation was torn asunder; the fountains of the great deep seemed opened; impiety to meet its end; the foundations of the earth were out of course. We now, after long familiarity and in much ignorance, can hardly read the history of those years without horror; what an effect must they have produced on those whose minds were fresh, and who knew the people killed! "Never," he writes to an English nobleman, "did a revolution affect to such a degree the private existence of such numbers of the first people of a great country; your examples of misery I could easily match with similar examples in this country and neighbourhood, and our sympathy is the deeper, as we do not possess, like you, the means of alleviating in some measure the misfortunes of the fugitives." It violently affected his views of English politics: he had a tendency, in consideration of his cosmopolitan cultivation, to treat them as local littlenesses, parish squabbles; but now his interest was keen and eager. "But," he says, "in this rage against slavery, in the numerous petitions against the slave-trade, was there no leaven of new democratical

principles? no wild ideas of the rights and natural equality of man? It is these I fear. Some articles in newspapers, some pamphlets of the year, the Jockey Club, have fallen into my hands. I do not infer much from such publications; yet I have never known them of so black and malignant a cast. I shuddered at Grey's motion; disliked the half-support of Fox, admired the firmness of Pitt's declaration, and excused the usual intemperance of Burke. Surely such men as ——, ——, ——, have talents for mischief. I see a club of reform which contains some respectable names. Inform me of the professions, the principles, the plans, the resources of these reformers. Will they heat the minds of the people? Does the French democracy gain no ground? Will the bulk of your party stand firm to their own interest and that of their country? Will you not take some active measures to declare your sound opinions, and separate yourselves from your rotten members? If you allow them to perplex government, if you trifle with this solemn business, if you do not resist the spirit of innovation in the first attempt, if you admit the smallest and most specious change in our parliamentary system, you are lost. You will be driven from one step to another; from principles just in theory to consequences most pernicious in practice; and your first concessions will be productive of every subsequent mischief, for which you will be answerable to your country and to posterity. Do not suffer yourselves to be lulled into a false security; remember the proud fabric of the French monarchy. Not four years ago it stood founded, as it might seem, on the rock of time, force, and opinion; supported by the triple aristocracy of the church, the nobility, and the parliaments. They are crumbled into dust: they are vanished from the earth. If this tremendous warning has no effect on the men of property in England; if it does not open every eye, and raise every arm,—you will deserve your fate. If I am too precipitate, enlighten; if I am too desponding, encourage me. My pen has run into this argument; for, as much a foreigner as you think me, on this momentous subject I feel myself an Englishman."

The truth clearly is, that he had arrived at the conclusion that he was the sort of person a populace kill. People wonder a great deal why very many of the victims of the French revolution were particularly selected; the Marquis de Custine, especially, cannot divine why they executed *his* father. The historians cannot show that they committed any particular crimes; the marquises and marchionesses seem very inoffensive. The fact evidently is, that they were killed for being polite. The world felt itself unworthy of it. There were so many bows, such regular smiles, such calm superior condescension,—could a mob

be asked to stand it? Have we not all known a precise, formal, patronising old gentleman — bland, imposing, something like Gibbon? have we not suffered from his dignified attentions? If *we* had been on the Committee of Public Safety, can we doubt what would have been the fate of that man? Just so wrath and envy destroyed in France an upper-class world.

After his return to England, Gibbon did not do much or live long. He completed his *Memoirs*, the most imposing of domestic narratives, the model of dignified detail. As we said before, if the Roman empire *had* written about itself, this was how it would have done so. He planned some other works, but executed none; judiciously observing that building castles in the air was more agreeable than building them on the ground. His career was, however, drawing to an end. Earthly dignity has its limits, even the dignity of an historian. He had long been stout; and now symptoms of dropsy began to appear. After a short interval, he died on the 16th of January 1794. We have sketched his character, and have no more to say. After all, what is our criticism worth? It only fulfils his aspiration, "that a hundred years hence I may still continue to be abused."

Art. II.—THE SPANISH CONQUEST IN AMERICA.

The Spanish Conquest in America, and its relation to the History of Slavery and to the Government of Colonies. By Arthur Helps. With Maps. Vols. I. and II. London, John W. Parker. 1855.

It needs a slight acquaintance only with our recent historians to discover, that whether they excel or are inferior to their predecessors in the last century, they differ from them in the conception of their office and the character of their researches. When Hume and Robertson claimed for themselves the merit of having raised new altars to the muse of British history, they grounded their pretensions, which are not unfounded, upon the fact, that they had retrenched the somewhat cumbrous grandeur of Bacon and Knollys, of Raleigh and Clarendon, and modelled their narratives upon the rules obeyed by Tacitus and Livy. There was, indeed, some unconscious deception in this assumption; they imagined themselves to have returned to the standards of the ancients, but their actual prototypes were Montesquieu and Voltaire. Like these admirable writers, the best English historians of the eighteenth century aimed, in the first place, at perspicuity of style and arrangement; in the next, at pictorial grouping; and lastly, at conveying to their readers as much in-

formation as was consistent with their theory of the narrative art. But in order to attain the simplicity and smoothness of their models, it was necessary to reject many subjects which the recent historian includes in his story as indispensable to his delineations of an age or a people. At social problems they could barely afford to hint, and relinquished them to the ethical speculator; the dry details of finance were either wholly passed over, or relegated to an appendix; the domestic life and manners of a nation were consigned to the antiquary; and art, science, and literature, were glanced at in the briefest of summaries. They succeeded in what they proposed to themselves—their pictures are deftly foreshortened and delicately coloured; and if history has since enlarged its domain, and multiplied its duties, the classical concinnity of the historians of Charles V. and the Stuarts is hitherto unrivalled, and will probably never be surpassed.

Its eminence, indeed, will perhaps never be directly assailed, since the ambition of historians has taken quite another direction. In the eighteenth century the best narrators aspired to be as clear and sparkling as their French exemplars; in the present we propose to ourselves instead the exhaustive method of Ranke and Von Raumer, and are not content with a story unless it contains all that can be said collaterally as well as directly upon a subject. Fortunately, with a few exceptions, our writers have not thought it requisite to emulate their Teutonic brethren in the art of packing into a sentence whatsoever may in any way be thrust into it —condition, qualification, exception, and inference; but in all other respects they seem to regard their narratives as a proper receptacle of the *omne scibile*. Mr. Macaulay is as much a historian of the manners and customs of the English as of the intrigues of courts or the proceedings of parliaments; Sir Archibald Alison deluges the reader on the one hand with financial returns, and on the other with geographical descriptions; and Mr. Grote has written a history of the religion and philosophy as well as of the civil and military affairs of the Greeks. The cause of truth, or at least of information, is perhaps better served by this wholesale mode of dealing with history, than it was by the select and separate sketches of the last century. But the task and responsibility of the historian are immeasurably increased. He has ceased to be an essayist, and has become, and is expected to be, an encyclopædist.

Fortunate, accordingly, is the writer whose story, being episodical in its character, admits of isolation without injury to its completeness, and who can pour the full stream of his knowledge into certain limited and shapely reservoirs. The history of the conquest of Spanish America is one of these felicitous themes.

It does not form part and parcel of the universal history of Europe, and yet is connected with it by a few filaments sufficiently strong to invest the subjugation and colonisation of the New World with European interest. Its area is limited; for so soon as the red man and his empires have finally yielded to the invader, the catastrophe is reached, and the fortunes of the various colonies alone afford any topic of interest. The movement of the drama is rapid: but it does not pass beyond the fifth act; nor is its proper *peripeteia*, as is so often the case with the convulsions of the Old World, only the commencement of a new series of changes and intrigues.

We would not, however, undervalue the real difficulties which are inherent in his subject, and with which Mr. Helps has so successfully grappled. The ease, or rather the natural limitations of his subject, affect his work as a whole, but not its component portions. The conquest of America was the work of so many separate adventurers; and, although springing from one centre, its radii are so numerous, the geographical area is so wide, and the character of the conquered nations so diversified, that it demands no ordinary skill to portray them without confusion, or to afford each scene its proper time and place, without incurring a risk of wearying the reader. And this perhaps is among the least of the difficulties which Mr. Helps has encountered. No one who has read his essays attentively can fail to have perceived that he is richly endowed with that analytic function which readily extracts order from apparent confusion, and amid an undigested mass of materials detects those alone of which the architect has actually need. It was to be expected, therefore, that his narrative, however complicate in its movements, would be lucid in its course, and that the discriminative essayist would possess in large measure the ordonnance of the historian.

The difficulties of his task are of different kind, and arise from two principal sources; in the first place from a certain imperfection in his materials, and in the next from his inevitable repetition of an oft-told tale. It will be the object of the following brief analysis of the volumes before us to show that he has overcome both these disadvantages satisfactorily; the one by the extent of his researches, the other by occupying a new point of view in his narrative, both as regards its scope and its illustrations.

The Spaniards themselves are the principal narrators of the conquest of America; and whether we consider that the same hand which guided the pen held also the sword, or the prejudices with which as an invading race they beheld their subjects, or as devout Catholics the abominations of paganism, it is not to be expected that they would afford any very full or direct in-

formation respecting the natives of the New World. This their ignorance and their pride alike forbade. As regards the historian, the Spanish writers on this theme are in the position of reluctant witnesses, requiring no ordinary force of cross-examination. Of their own hardships and heroism, of their hunger and thirst and nakedness, in the illimitable forest and the dismal swamp, how ten put a thousand to flight, how often the saints aided them in their strife with the heathen and the elements, even in the very valley of the shadow of death, they speak willingly enough, and not without such pomp and bravery of words as became the hidalgos of Castile. Equally diffuse are they respecting the cowardice and treachery of the Indians, their indolence and evil heart of unbelief, their apathy towards the preachers of the Catholic faith, their contempt of the saints and the Virgin, their unclean ritual, and their ignorance of the laws and usages of civilised men. Neither are they silent touching the signs and wonders which they beheld; the strange aspect of the planets, the fruits, the animals, the cities, the temples; the great arterial rivers, in comparison with which the Tagus and Guadalquivir were but as trenches that gird an olive-yard; the everlasting mountains, beside which their sierras were as mole-hills; or the sheeted lakes, in comparison with which the inundations of the Ebro, "when the sun rides in Taurus" melting the Cantabrian snows, were but a mill-pool. Of all these marvels they speak sufficiently at times; for the Spaniards of that day were not an inapprehensive race, and often write as men awed by the mystery and the majesty around them. But, as will be seen presently, what regards the conquered rather than what affected the conqueror is the object of Mr. Helps's researches; and of this the reapers of the harvest left but scanty gleanings here and there. Luckily for the historian and ourselves, the moral and social phenomena of the red man were objects of deep interest to their earliest and most unwearied advocate; and the memorials of Las Casas supply some of the information which we seek vainly in the chronicles of Oviedo and Bernal Diaz. Yet the observations of the good clerigo were necessarily confined to a few districts, and principally to the island races. He beheld not, even in spirit,

> "Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
> And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
> Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoiled
> Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
> Call El-dorado."

And when these empires had become Spanish vice-royalties, the documents of their past history were sedulously destroyed, partly because the conquerors were rude men and cared not for them,

and partly because they were, after their manner, religious men, and thought they did God service by destroying all the muniments of the synagogue of Satan. Their zeal was ill-directed; the loss is irreparable: yet so our puritan ancestors broke down the carved work of the sanctuary; and scattered to the winds and the rains inexhaustible treasures of learning, in the same spirit which gave to the fire the records of the Aztecs. We may not cast a stone against the Spaniards: they knew not what they did.

The second difficulty is that of repeating, so as to attract the reader, in the first place, and afterwards to win his grace and favour, a thrice-told tale. For, setting aside all intermediate versions of the story of Columbus, Cortes, and Pizarro,—and even such portions of it as have percolated into fiction are no mean disadvantages to the *fourth* historical narrator,—Robertson, Washington Irving, and Prescott are no ordinary "Richmonds in the field." He should be a hardy writer who, with all the means and appliances of recent investigation to boot, would undertake to re-write the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Southey, writing to his friend Beresford respecting his own forthcoming *History of Brazil*, observes, that if Robertson's other histories be no better than his *History of America*, his worth as a chronicler is of the slenderest. This may be so; but it is very difficult, even if it be meet, to demolish an established reputation; and zeal for "very truth" will never eat up the general reader. Mr. Helps's present work, however, does not essentially affect the reputation of any one of these established authors. It regards the subject from an opposite point of view. It is a correlate, not a rival. It deals rather with the issues and the victims of the conquest than with the conquest of America itself. We hear as much of the bondmen as of the bondholders:

"Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni."

Mr. Helps is more on Cato's side than on Cæsar's, as his own words testify. He purposes "to bring before the reader not conquest only, but the results of conquest: the mode of colonial government which ultimately prevailed, the extirpation of native races, the introduction of other races, the growth of slavery, and the settlement of the *encomiendas*, on which all Indian society depended, has been the object of this history."

The conception of his present work, however, had an ethnological basis, which should be kept in mind by the reader.

"Some years ago," Mr. Helps informs us, "being much interested in the general subject of slavery, and engaged in writing upon it, I began to investigate the origin of modern slavery. I soon found that the works commonly referred to gave me no sufficient insight into the matter. Questions, moreover, arose in my mind not immediately con-

nected with slavery, but bearing closely upon it, with respect to the distribution of races in the New World. 'Why,' said I to myself, 'are there none but black men in this island? why are there none but copper-coloured men on that line of coast? how is it that in one town the white population predominates, while in another the aborigines still hold their ground? There must be a series of historical events which, if brought to light, would solve all these questions; and I will endeavour to trace this out for myself.'"*

Having thus stated the particular aspect from which Mr. Helps's volumes are to be regarded, and accordingly shown that, in spite of his many precursors, he is not repeating an oft-told tale, we proceed to consider his execution of the task which he has now undertaken. It is not often that a *rifacimento* of a previous work is successful. The bloom of a first conception is apt to pass away; the critical faculty often becomes too potent for the well-being of the conceptive and pictorial powers. Akenside and Tasso marred the freshness of their original poems by recasting them; and we imagine that there are few readers of Clarendon and Johnson who do not regret that the former did not adhere to his intention of composing a biography instead of a history, or that the latter congealed in a stately journal the spirit and familiarity of his *Letters from the Hebrides*. Although, however, the *History of the Spanish Conquest of America* is based upon the well-known *Conquerors of the New World and their Bondsmen*, and is an enlargement of the earlier essay, we have no reason to regret in this instance that the plan has been expanded, and the subject submitted to a complete revision.

So far, indeed, from regretting that Mr. Helps has foregone his earlier undertaking, we are rather disposed to lament that, as regards the form of his present work, he has occasionally retained so many vestiges of that essay. We conceive the functions of the essayist to be essentially distinct from those of the historian. In the one case, it is not only allowable, but also becoming, that the writer should frequently appear in his own person, admit us to the conclave of his own meditations, and discuss, as it were, with his readers such social and ethical questions as may come in his way. But as regards history, it can hardly be, in our opinion, too pictorial and apart from the author himself. In the colouring of his narrative there must always be abundant opportunities for expressing his own sentiments, but the expression should flow naturally from the events recorded and from the characters introduced, and not from the personal interposition of the author him-

* We are not willing to forget the thoughtful essayist in the picturesque historian. Mr. Helps, in a former work, has expressed the same idea more briefly and quaintly; he wishes to show "how the black people came to the New World, how the brown people faded away from certain countries in it, and what part the white people had in these doings."

self as chorus. We do not think, for example, that the pictorial effect of the narrative of the conquest is heightened by the author's informing us that some of it was composed during the troubles of the year 1848. Such intimation of a totally dissimilar crisis strikes us as an anachronism not unlike the presence of a figure essentially modern in a representation of the schools of Athens or the garden of Gethsemane. And much more startling is it to find the writer occasionally acting as interlocutor or eye-witness in a council-chamber three hundred years ago. Mr. Carlyle set this evil precedent in his *Life and Letters of Cromwell:* but his powers of word-painting are so peculiar, that we forgive in him a practice which in any other narrative we must regard as blemishes.

And we are the more inclined to regret in the present instance these occasional departures from the precedents of classical historians, because in the greater portion of his narrative Mr. Helps's diction possesses many of the striking excellencies of historical composition. His language is generally perspicuous and idiomatic, free from all the current tricks and devices of style, free from bravura and epigram, and remarkably pregnant in sense and picturesque in form. In a second edition a very slight amount of excision will render his narrative inferior in vigour and grace to none of modern date, and entitle the accomplished author to rank beside the very foremost of those who, in the present century, have added permanent works to the historical library of England. Our official growl is soon uttered; and while reading the passages which we shall presently bring forward from the volumes before us, the reader may very probably wonder that it should have been uttered at all. A much more difficult task now remains for us, that of conveying to our readers such a general view of the conquest of America as will justly represent the learning, the thoughtfulness, the practical wisdom, and the pictorial beauty of the narrative.

So far as the present volumes extend, the course of events group themselves around three principal figures, Columbus, Las Casas, and Cortes; and around two capital ethnological subjects, the characters of the conquered and their conquerors. Immediately belonging to these, and essentially interwoven with them, are numerous important questions upon colonial government and commerce, opposite aspects of civilisation, the meeting of the two great floods of European and Indian life, and the almost inevitable destiny of certain races of mankind to sink, to die away, to disappear, when brought into contact with stronger forms of social and religious life. Neither is the interest of Mr. Helps's volumes confined to the first encounter between the white and the red man. The Negro race plays no unimportant part in the scene; the discovery of America being fraught with incalculable

misery for those who, drinking the waters of the Niger and the Gambia, seemed to be severed from the interests of Europe by insurmountable barriers of sand, by inhospitable shores, and by the beasts which it is not granted to man to harness to his chariot or to pen within his folds.

One of the most interesting chapters in Mr. Helps's volumes is that in which, under the somewhat quaint title of an "Imaginary Voyage," he has reviewed the aspect of the Indian races as they would have appeared to European eyes a generation before their invasion by the Spaniards. The voyage is imaginary; but the facts from which the review is constructed are collected from the journals of the first explorers with indefatigable pains. Of all the sections of his work, this has probably cost the author the most care and anxiety. He has admitted nothing unwarranted; he has carefully winnowed and sifted his authorities—bushels of chaff often returning to him but a few grains of wheat—and, like a dexterous worker in mosaic, he has set in a new frame, and arranged with rare pictorial skill, whatsoever he found scattered through printed or manuscript documents illustrative of the population, opinions, institutions, and civilisation of the various races of the new continent.

The history of the human race, its derivation, and its migrations, is no longer consigned to the hands of the mere speculator. Buffon and Lord Kaimes would not obtain a hearing at the present time. The questions of race and dispersion have been rescued from their hands by the severe investigations of the philologer and the physiologist. And so far as these fellow-labourers have proceeded hitherto, their conclusions seem to point to an original stock and cradle of the human race; and so far support equally the most ancient of records and of legends. Until better evidence has been adduced than that which satisfied Dr. Knox and some recent inquirers, we shall adhere to the belief that the high lands of Armenia sent forth the first detachment of emigrants to the alluvial plains of Mesopotamia, "to Arachosia and Candaor east," and westward, through the Transcaucasian regions, to the central plateau of Europe between the Balkan and Carpathian Hills. But the very restriction of the area of dispersion, and the implied derivation of mankind from a common stock—the question of a single pair is immaterial—only render more difficult the problem of the population of the new continent. The parentage of America, indeed, has nearly as many claimants as that of the oldest patrician house in Europe. It has been derived from the Phœnicians, whose known but unrecorded voyages seem to give them some title to be regarded as the progenitors of the nations west of the Pillars of Hercules. It has been traced to the dispersed Hebrews, who assuredly, centuries before

their place as a nation was made void, had permeated to nearly every corner of the civilised world, and who were found alike on the banks of the Tagus and of the Amour. But in the strict sense of the word the Jews founded no colonies, since they drifted over the earth, in pursuit of gain or shelter, only as families or individuals. Nor, in spite of some startling religious ideas contained in the creed of the Aztecs, is there any reason or necessity for assuming that the descendants of Abraham ever visited, before the conquest, either the eastern or western flank of the new continent. Mr. Helps indulges in no premature speculations on this question, although he intimates his general agreement with Humboldt and other sound inquirers, that the oceanitic races were probably the first peoplers of America. Even then, however, the curtain of the mystery is scarcely lifted. For, whatever may have been the source of either Mexican or Peruvian civilisation, it is certain, not only that each was of comparatively recent date, and, had we the documents, might probably be brought within chronological limits, but also that the Aztec and Capac dynasties had reared themselves upon nations older and mightier than themselves, and whose antiquity and power are attested by monuments no less striking than the pyramids of the Pharaohs, and by the ruins of cities as expressive of departed might as Thebes, or Babylon, or Hecatompolis.

Mr. Helps "imagines" a voyage undertaken by navigators well qualified to observe and record what they beheld, and sufficiently acquainted with the diversified nations and institutions of Europe in the fifteenth century to comprehend at once the points of resemblance and difference between the old and the new continent. They depart, too, as the real discoverers did after them, deeply imbued with the religious or superstitious prejudices of their age, eager to bring within the pale of the church whatsoever forms of unbelief they might encounter, and disposed to regard all that was not of "the household of faith" as an unclean and abominable thing. In two respects only they differ from the actual explorers; they did not go forth in quest of gold or pearls, nor to render the red man their tributaries and slaves.

To the supposed or the actual discoverers at once presented itself a palpable difference between the inhabitants of the islands which, like so many ante-chambers, stud the eastern coast of America, and the inhabitants of the continent. Various degrees and discrepancies in civilisation were also perceptible in the population of the mainland itself. The seat of the great empires was either, like Mexico, drawn deep within the mainland and radiated towards the sea, or, like Peru, it was seated on the west flank of that gigantic spine of the continent which, even at a distance of 150 miles, casts the shadow of its peaks and ridges upon the

Pacific. At Paria, "the earthly paradise of Columbus," they are greeted for the first time with the aspect of that tropic vegetation that has afforded Humboldt occasion for wedding so much eloquence to so much science.

"By night," says Mr. Helps, "sweet odours, varying with every hour of the watch, were wafted from the shore to the vessel lying near; and the forest-trees, brought together by the serpent-tracery of myriads of strange parasitical plants, might well seem to the fancy like some great design of building, over which the lofty palms, a forest upon a forest, appeared to present a new order of architecture. In the background rose the mist, like incense. These, however, were but the evening fancies of the mariner, who had before him fondly in his mind the wreathed pillars of the cathedral of Burgos, or the thousand-columned Christian mosque of Cordova, or the perfect fane of Seville; and when the moon rose, or the innumerable swarms of luminous insects swept across the picture, it was but a tangled forest after all, wherein the shaping hand of man had made no memorial to his Creator"*

As yet they would discover neither temple nor image, nor any trace of those dark and cruel superstitions which are only less awful because they are less ancient, and have thereby inflicted on mankind fewer centuries of dread and degradation than the dark, cruel, ancestral creeds of central Asia. Occasionally, indeed, grand and elaborate dances of men would be visible through the trees; but whether they were meant to express joy, or sorrow, or devotion, would be moot-points to the mariners. And this absence of visible creed and *cultus* throughout the long and sinuous range of shore from Araya to Darien, would be the more remarkable to men (and it actually moved the first explorers to wonder) accustomed at home to rapid successions of cathedral-towers, and church-spires, and oratories and crosses, to the pomp and circumstance of devotion on nearly every occasion of joy or woe connected with human life, or to those more august commemorations of the church which ranged indifferently from the manger at Bethlehem to the martyrdom of the Saint of Com-

* The supposed and the real "Ophir" of the fifteenth century presented many features in common. The above description may recall to the reader a passage in *Paradise Lost*, composed by a poet who studied voyages and travels with as much zest as he did the Romaunts of Charlemagne and his Peerage, and the severer fictions of both the Greek and Roman muse.

"—— now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
These balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest: with such delay
Well pleased, they slack their course, and many a league,
Cheered with the grateful smell, old ocean smiles."

postella. The natives, however, although their ritual was of the simplest order, knew that there was one God, and offered some sacrifices to him.

But beyond the isthmus, "sailing northward," they came within the verge and ken of a cultus, which would remind the more instructed of what was told in ancient books of the abominations of Egypt and Canaan, and to the ignorant might recall the great square at Seville or Toledo drest for an *auto-da-fé*. "White buildings would be seen among the trees, bearing some likeness to truncated pyramids; and, in the setting sun, dark figures would be seen against the horizon on the tops of these pyramids, from whose gestures it would be sadly and reluctantly admitted by the horror-stricken crew that they were looking upon a human sacrifice."

In the Bay of Honduras another marvel greeted the eyes of the explorers. They had already seen and heard enough to assure them that they were in the neighbourhood of empires as advanced in some elements of civilisation as Castile and Arragon themselves, and occupying a range of territory vaster and more opulent than the dominions of Spain and Portugal and their Neapolitan and African provinces combined. Hard was it to persuade the Spaniard of that age that any monarchy equalled or surpassed his own; that any cities were fairer than Seville, or any plains more teeming and pleasant to the eye than those of Andalusia. But they now discerned that the living empires rested upon the ruins of states "older and mightier than they." For they had now come upon some buried city, buried so long ago, that huge trees had risen among its ruins, and gigantic parasites had twisted their lithe arms around columns, and thrown their shoots along peristyles, playing with the strange faces in stone, overshadowing winged symbols of power and sacrificial instruments, and embracing the carved imagery of fruits and flowers their kindred. No living creatures are to be seen there: the burdens of Babylon and Nineveh seem to have been re-acted in the western world; and the explorers, comparing old things with new, and measuring what they saw by the standard of the most Catholic creed, depart awe-struck from these buried mounds, surely believing that these buildings have been sacred to no good purpose, and that the cities have been condemned of God for their inhuman and bloody idolatries. To the real discoverers the spectacle of these desolate places would but confirm their original misconception that they had reached the India of Ptolemy; for the narratives of medieval travellers also told of cities deserted by man and reclaimed by the animals lying in the heart of Asia, the ancient lairs of Nimrod and Belshazzar, or the more recent palaces of "the great kings" of Persia and Parthia.

The march of Cortes across the grand plateau of "New Spain" has been rendered familiar to the reader by the works of Robertson and Prescott. We shall therefore not follow Mr. Helps's imaginary voyage further than may be sufficient to illustrate the social condition of the native races at the time of their conquest. Before, however, we close this chapter of his book, we shall forestall the chronological sequence of the narrative, and introduce in this place a portion of Mr. Helps's description of Mexico. The anachronism will not be excessive, since such as Cortes beheld it from the broad causeway at Iztaparapa, such it would have presented itself to the European eye before the voyage of Columbus.

"Who shall describe Mexico, the Mexico of that age? It ought to be one who had seen all the wonders of the world; and he should have for an audience those who had dwelt in Venice and Constantinople, who had looked down upon Granada from the Alhambra, and who had studied all that remains to be seen of the hundred gates of Thebes, of Babylon, and of Nineveh.

"The especial attributes of the most beautiful cities in the world were here conjoined; and that which was the sole boast of many a world-renowned name formed but one of the charms of this enchantress among cities. Like Granada, encircled but not frowned upon by mountains; fondled and adorned by water, like Venice; as grand in its buildings as Babylon of old; and rich with gardens, like Damascus,—the great city of Mexico was at that time the fairest in the world, and has never since been equalled.

"Neither was hers a beauty, like that of many cities, which gratifies the eye at a distance, but which diminishes at each advancing step of the beholder, until it absolutely degenerates into squalidity. She was beautiful when seen from afar; she still maintained her beauty when narrowly examined by the traveller; she was the city not only of a great king, but of an industrious and thriving people.

"Mexico was situated in a great salt lake communicating with a fresh-water lake. It was approached by three principal causeways of great breadth, constructed of solid masonry two lances in breadth. The length of one of these causeways was two leagues, and that of another a league and a half; and these two ample causeways united in the middle of the city, where stood the great temple. At the ends of these causeways were wooden drawbridges, so that communication could be cut off between the causeways and the town, which would thus become a citadel. There was also an aqueduct which communicated with the mainland, consisting of two separate lines of work in masonry, in order that if one should need repair, the supply of water for the city might not be interrupted.

"The streets were the most various in construction that have ever been seen in any city in the world. Some were of dry land, others wholly of water; and others, again, had pathways of pavement, while

in the centre there was room for boats. The foot-passengers could talk with those in the boats.

"The abodes of the Mexican kings were not like the petty palaces of northern princes. One of the most observant of those Spaniards who first saw these wonders speaks of a palace of Montezuma's in which there was a room where three thousand persons could be well accommodated, and on the terrace-like roof of which a splendid tournament might have been given.

"There was a market-place twice as large as that of the city of Salamanca, surrounded with porticos in which there was room for fifty thousand people to buy and sell.

"The great temple of the city maintained its due proportion of magnificence. In the plan of the city of Mexico, which is to be found in a very early edition of the Letters of Cortes, the space allotted to the temple is twenty times as great as that allotted to the market-place. Indeed, the sacred enclosure was in itself a town; and Cortes, who seldom stops in his terrible narrative to indulge in praise or in needless description, says, that no human tongue could explain the grandeur and the peculiarities of this temple. Cortes uses the word 'temple;' but it might rather be called a sacred city, as it contained many temples, and the abodes of all the priests and virgins who ministered at them, also a university and an arsenal.

"It was enclosed by loity stone walls, and was entered by four portals, surmounted by fortresses. No less than twenty truncated pyramids, probably cased with porphyry, rose up from within that enclosure. High over them all towered the great temple dedicated to the god of war. This, like the rest, was a truncated pyramid, with ledges round it, and with two small towers upon the highest surface, in which were placed the images of the great god of war (Huitzilopochtli), and of the principal deity of all (Tezcatlipeck), the Mexican Jupiter."

Without inferring from the exterior magnificence or the internal arrangements of Mexico a degree of civilisation corresponding to that of London or Paris, or even Vienna at the present moment, we cannot fail to discern that the Europeans conquered a people in many respects more civilised than themselves. In the Europe of that day it would have been in vain to look for canals or roads like those of the Aztecs; equally vain to have looked for such provisions for the sanitary condition of the inhabitants, or for so efficient a system of police. The mention of a university at Mexico should have elicited some explanation from the historian. We may, however, infer from other portions of his narrative the science and the literature there cultivated. As in Rome before the introduction of Greek literature, the learning of the Mexicans consisted of theology and history. Their ritual was complex, the ranks of the priesthood were numerous, the attributes of the deities were diversified, and there was apparently in their theo-

logical system a mixture of two very opposite creeds,—one of simple nature-worship, in which the sacrifices were the fruits and flowers of the earth; and the other, and doubtless the later in date, the ghastly doctrine of expiation by human victims. The events of war and peace were scrupulously recorded by the Mexican chroniclers, and in a fashion much less rude than that originally employed by the Roman pontiffs, since it argues a more refined taste, and demands greater skill to describe events by symbolic pictures than to drive nails into the wall of a temple. From certain known portions of Aztec divinity we shall probably not err in ascribing to it no small measure of ethical and metaphysical subtlety, at least we may infer that in these respects the Mexican priests were not inferior to the Celtic Druids, who for many ages were ignorant of, or disdained the art of writing. The Mexicans had attained the religious belief or delusion that severance from the common relations of life was an acceptable service to the gods. They had their sacred virgins and their peculiar priesthood, the practices of confession and absolution, their inner mysteries, and the symbolic apparatus which in all ages has been provided by those within the veil for the instruction or bewilderment of those without. Among the most curious pages in Mr. Helps's volumes is that on which he has inscribed the following Mexican forms of prayer and absolution. We could almost suspect that the doctors of the university of Salamanca denounced and demolished the liturgies of the Aztecs out of jealousy, and that the Spanish priesthood were justly alarmed at a system of theology as subtle, but more indulgent to human infirmity than their own.

The first of these prayers was used after auricular confession, which, however, it appears, occurred once only in a lifetime. The Mexican priesthood had still to learn the lesson of converting the remorse and alarm of a sinner into a life-long instrument of torture and influence. It ran thus:

"Our Lord most gracious, the defender and favourer of all: you have just heard the confession of this poor sinner, in which he has made known in your presence his rottenness and filthiness." The confessor then went on to say—it may be remarked, that the priest is the vicarious spokesman here, as in other more religious latitudes—that "the sinner might have concealed some of his sins, in which case dire will be his punishment; but perchance he has spoken the whole truth, and now feels 'dolour and discontent' for all that is past, and firm resolve never to sin more." He then proceeded: "I speak in presence of your majesty who knowest all things, and knowest that this poor wretch did not sin with entire liberty of free will, but was helped and inclined to it by the natural condition of the sign under which he was born. And since it is so, O most gracious Lord, defender and favourer of all men, even if this poor man has grievously offended against you,

peradventure will you not cause your anger and your indignation to depart from him?" Continuing in this strain, the confessor besought pardon and remission of sins, "a thing which descends from heaven as clearest and purest water, with which your majesty washes away and purifies all the stains and filthiness which sins cause in the soul."

What follows is even more curious. For the priest then addressed the penitent, and told him that he had come to a place of much danger and labour and dread, where there is a ravine from which no one who had once fallen in could make his escape; also, he had come to a place where snares and nets are set one with another, and one over against another. All this is said metaphorically of the world and of sin. He then proceeded to speak of the judgment to come in another world, and of the lake of miseries and intolerable torments. "But now, here you are," he said to the penitent; "and the time is arrived in which you have had pity on yourself to speak with our Lord, who sees the secrets of hearts." And he then told the penitent there was a new birth for him, but he "must look to his ways well, and see that he sinned no more." No priest regular or secular could so far have shriven him better; but there follows an ugly blot, forming, in our opinion, no part of the original form of confession; for the penitent, finally, must cleanse his house and himself, and seek a slave to sacrifice before God; and he must work a year or more in the house of God, and undergo penitential exercises, "piercing his tongue for the injurious words it had uttered; and he must give in charity even to the depriving himself of sustenance; for, look," said the priest, speaking of the poor, "their flesh is as thy flesh, and they are men as thou art, especially the sick; for they are the image of God. There is no more to say to thee: go in peace; and I pray God that he may help thee to perform that which thou art bound to do, for he is gracious to all men."

Scarcely less remarkable is the prayer appointed to be said by a Mexican king, or governor, upon his election, wherein a spirit of devotion is singularly blended with a spirit of despotism. After celebrating the greatness of God, it proceeds in a vein of humiliation, saying that he (the king) deserves blindness of his eyes and crushing of his body, that it is he who requires to be governed, and that the Lord must know many to whom he could confide this charge of government; "but since you are determined to put me forward as an object of scandal and laughter for the world, let your will be done." The conclusion, however, is in a higher tone: "Although," he proceeds to say, "I am a poor creature, I wish to say that unworthily I am your image, and represent your person; and the words which I shall speak have to be held as your words, and my countenance to be esteemed as your countenance, and my hearing as your hearing,

and the punishments that I shall ordain have to be considered as if you ordained them; wherefore I pray you, put within me your spirit and your words, that all may obey, and that none may be able to contradict."

Such a prayer, with all its moral grandeur, might have been offered up indifferently by the Commander of the Faithful, prompted by the chief of the Ulemas; by Philip II., at the dictation of his confessor; or by Charles I., with the sanction of Laud. The connection between kingcraft and priestcraft was not confined to the Old World, and is indeed found wherever a theocracy, as in Judæa or Egypt, is the supreme power in the state, or where religion is a state-machine. The barbarian Aztecs were not inferior to the civilised Castilians in cementing the alliance between the worlds temporal and spiritual. In reading of the cruel and gross superstitions of the Mexicans, we are tempted to hail, as Mr. Helps seems to do, the advent of Cortes, as the epoch of deliverance from a creed which, like that of the worshippers of Moloch, offered the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul. It was indeed the dawning of a better day when scenes like the following, so well described by the historian, were no longer enacted in the great city of Anahuac. We again borrow from his "imaginary voyage;" but such a spectacle was actually beheld by Alvarado, whom, from his ruddy complexion, the Mexicans called "Tonatiuh, the sun-faced man," while acting, in the absence of Cortes, as commander of the Spanish garrison in Mexico.

"Once being detained in a dense crowd in the square of the great temple, they became unwilling spectators of a human sacrifice. At first they see six priests, five of them clothed in white, and the sixth or chief priest in red and otherwise richly attired. Inquiring his name, they are answered, Tezcatlipeck, or Huitzilopechtli, and are astonished, knowing these to be the names of Mexican divinities, and not being aware that the chief priest assumed for the day the name of the god who was honoured by the sacrifice."

This identification of the Deity with his priest is a stride beyond the assumption of the successor of St. Peter to be accounted as God's vicegerent on earth. Sometimes, indeed, even a greater mystery was shadowed forth; for on some occasions "the victim also represented the Deity to whom the sacrifice was offered."

"Scanning this group of priests more closely, the Spanish explorers discover that the priests are carrying to the upper area of the temple the body of a naked and living man. The long flights of steps are slowly mounted, and the unfortunate victim placed upon a large, convex, green stone. Four of the attendant priests hold him down by the arms and legs, while a fifth places a wooden instrument, of a serpent form, across his throat. The convex altar raises the body of the victim into an arched shape, and enables the chief priest to make with

more facility the fatal incision, and to remove the heart of the victim. The heart was then presented to the idol, being laid within his uncouth hand, or placed upon his altar.

"It was a beautiful day on which the explorers beheld this scene. The emeralds worn by the chief priest glittered in the sun, and his feathers fluttered lightly with the breeze. The bright pyramidal temples were reflected in the lake, and in a thousand mirrors formed by the enclosed waters in the water-streets. A busy pleasant noise from the adjacent market-place was heard throughout the great square. The victim had uttered no sound. He knew the inutility of any outcry. Priests, victims, and people were alike accustomed to view such ceremonies, and this was one of the ordinary sacrifices. The expression of the faces in the crowd was calm and almost self-satisfied. All around was beautiful and serene; and it was hardly until the mangled body, hurled down from the upper area of the temple, had come near to the feet of the astounded voyagers, that they could believe 'they had really seen what passed before their eyes.'"

In a subsequent chapter Mr. Helps contrasts, though in no spirit of extenuation, the savage sacrifices of Mexico with the savage games of pagan Rome. He supposes an inversion of time and incidents—that Christianity had arisen in the New instead of the Old World; that some Peruvian Columbus had discovered lands east of the Atlantic, and penetrated the great Mediterranean instead of the great Mexican Gulf. Then, in the first centuries of the Christian era, American missionaries might have gazed from the benches of the Coliseum upon combats of men with men between whom no enmity existed, or of men with beasts without the pretext or pleasures of the chase. "These spectators are truly savages," the strangers might have exclaimed; "they butcher one another not for any cause so respectable as superstition, but from a morbid love of amusement. And there are women sitting and applauding amongst them, and with wild outcries urging the populace to refuse the petition of the kneeling gladiator, and giving the sign of murder to the guards of the arena."* The golden palaces, the marble colonnades, the distant capital, and the adjacent pillar of Trajan, rock and reel before their eyes as through a crimson mist, and the envoys depart bewildered by the mingled civilisation and barbarism of imperial Rome.

The parallel, in our opinion, is incomplete, and even unnecessary. We need not resort to imagination or inversion of ages and events to produce a spectacle that shall equal, if it does not transcend, the horrors of an Aztec sacrifice to Tezcatlipeck. Among the caciques who were transported to Spain as tokens and trophies of the conquest, many survived long enough to

* "—— et verso pollice vulgi
Quemlibet occidunt populariter."

become familiarised with the sportive or solemn recreations of their Spanish lords. They would behold a bull-fight in the lists at Seville, or an *auto-da-fé* in the great square of Toledo. They would gaze upon an amphitheatre thronged with spectators; sheltered from the Andalusian sun by awnings of silk or the fine linen of Syria; cooled by artificial fountains drawn from the Guadalquivir; refreshed by showers of perfume; leaping, shouting, and applauding, as horse and man rolled down, or as the Biscayan bull fell headlong on the sand soaked and slippery with blood. They would behold a yet ghastlier spectacle, awakening a yet more absorbing interest in the spectators. The king is on his throne; Torquemada sits beside him on the dais; the banners of the Inquisition float beside those of Arragon and Castile; the cathedral has sent its chapter and its choir; the monastery its sable or white-robed brethren; the grandees are surrounded by their suite; the beauty and the chivalry of the realm are sitting side by side; and in the outer circle is an indiscriminate crowd, eager, jubilant, and incontrollable. The vacant space in the midst is occupied by five upright stakes, to which are bound, in quaint flame-coloured garments, a Moriscoe, three Jews, and one who, though neither Jew nor Moriscoe, has been reading feloniously an ancient book written 1500 years before by certain fishermen of Galilee.

Even without the intervention of the Spanish iconoclasts, the more cruel forms of Aztec superstition would probably in a few generations have become obsolete. The bulk of the people called to mind with regret the simpler ritual of their ancestors, when fruits and flowers were sin-offerings or thank-offerings; the higher class of nobles had begun to resent the predominance of the hierarchy, and even the monarchs themselves chafed occasionally at their bondage to the spiritual powers. And beyond the immediate circle of Mexico itself its theological system did not extend. It was not, according to all appearance, a proselytizing religion; and its sovereigns were content with the tribute, and did not insist on the orthodoxy of their subjects. Montezuma also, though like Agamemnon he were "king of Argos," was not, like him, "king of the islands." His dominion, indeed, hardly extended to the verge of the mainland, and the character of the natives who were beyond the shadow of Aztec despotism differed materially from that of the Mexicans proper. It scarcely admits of a doubt, that the Mexicans stood in a relation to their subjects similar to that which Dietrich of Berne or Alboin the Lombard stood to the Roman provincials. They occupied the land as masters, but they were not kith or kin with their subjects. The character of the islanders generally, and of the races which inhabited the sea-coast, resembled that of the natives of Otaheite when

they were discovered by Cooke. Neither the Otaheitans nor the Indians were capable, without foreign admixture, of any strong or progressive form of civilisation; yet it was an evil destiny, evil as the nemesis which in ancient belief was attached to the Pelasgian and Achæan races, that consigned a people so generally docile and humane to the discipline of the Spaniard.

Of their gentle, winning, and guileless disposition there is a chain of evidence from the epoch of their discovery. Columbus describes them as "a loving, uncovetous people, so docile in all things, that he believed in all the world there was not a better people or a better country; they love their neighbours as themselves, and they have the sweetest and gentlest way of talking in the world, and always with a smile." Their outward appearance was prepossessing, the expression of their countenance was mild, their form beautiful, their complexion good, and their movements graceful. Of their moral qualities, as of their religious dogmas, it is difficult to judge, since our knowledge of them is derived from those whose interest it was to represent both as inconsistent with the ethics of Europe and the doctrines of the most Catholic church. Mr. Helps believes them to have been less treacherous than most other uncultivated people. But even of their inclination to deceive we have but suspicious evidence. Fraud is the weapon of the weak, and the imputation of fraud is never more frequent than when the oppressor and his victims have no language in common. The Indian of North America is, indeed, both fraudulent and ferocious. But the Huron and the Blackfoot had, before their intercourse with Europe commenced, attained almost to the proficiency of civilised man in the arts of war and diplomacy. He was, in Lear's phrase, "man sophisticated," not "the simple native of the new-found isle." Indolence, again, is a staple charge brought by the Spaniards against the Indians; and to those who have beheld the *vis inertiæ* of the modern descendants of the conquerors the charge will appear about as reasonable as the proverbial reproof of the devil to sin. The charge, however, even if well-grounded, resolves itself into a very simple form. The Indian had few wants, a genial climate, and a sufficient, if not an abundant, supply of fruits good for food. Gold he prized only as a personal ornament, but its possession conveyed neither rank nor power. For himself, therefore, he had few motives to toil; and it demanded casuistry beyond the subtlety of the Salamancan professors to convince him that it was meet and right and his bounden duty to delve in the mine or to moil in the maize-field, in order that his Spanish lords might have bread enough and gold enough to satiate their greed. Lastly, he Indian's deficiency in courage may be treated with the same loubt as his imputed idleness. What alacrity could be expected

from any man who, under a tropical sun, is employed in gathering gold for other people? or what extraordinary valour is to be looked for from races who fought naked against men clad in steel, used lances of wood sharpened in the fire or pointed with stones or fish-bones, against antagonists provided with iron weapons and fire-arms; regarded the horse and the bloodhound with equal awe and superstition, and who knew as much of the rudiments of military discipline as the Spaniards of that day knew of the shells and mortars employed against the Redan and Malakhoff towers?

We have regarded the two extremes of Indian civilisation as it was seen by the first explorers: that of the islanders and of portions of the continent,—a saturnian realm; and that of the Aztecs, advanced in some respects beyond that of Christendom in the fifteenth century, inferior to it only in the muniments of war, and equal to it in the ferocity of its political feuds, and the strength and rigour of its church-establishment. A second and more interesting question now opens upon us—the sources of that civilisation, as displayed in the empires of Peru and Mexico, or in the races which, independently of these, had begun to ascend in the scale of political life.

Our ethnological data are scarcely sufficient to justify us in pronouncing whether the inhabitants of the New World, at the time of its discovery, should be regarded as one race of men, or as a congeries of separate emigrations from the eastern shores of Asia. The Aztecs were certainly distinct from their subject-population; but the difference between them may not have been greater than that which is ordinarily perceived between mountain and valley tribes, for example, between the Dorians and the subject Achæans, or between the Franks and the Gauls. Whether, however, one or many emigrations from Asia successively peopled America, it appears that there were two principal centres from which the development of the Indians proceeded, one radiating to the north, the other to the south of the Isthmus of Darien, and represented respectively in the civilisation of Mexico and Peru. It is remarkable also, that in both these nations the first epoch or seed of higher cultivation was attributed to the sudden appearance among them of persons differing from themselves in aspect and origin. Among the Peruvians, Mango Capac, accompanied by his sister, Mama Oello, first introduced a form of polity and a code of laws, and then ascended to his father the sun; among the Mexicans the same good offices were rendered "by a white and bearded man, of broad brow," and dressed in strange garb, bearing the appellation of Quetzalcohuatl, or "green-feathered snake," who, after his mission was fulfilled, went away into a far country and was never heard of more. The traditions

of both nations accord in ascribing their earliest legislation to an extraneous, if not, indeed, to a supernatural author.

Of the region from which these benevolent sages descended there is no record, and it is a fruitless speculation to consider whether their laws were a transcript of any great oriental code, contained in the sacred books of the Brahmins, the Bhuddists, or the Chinese. The effects of their legislation were, however, different; for whereas the Peruvians never departed from the laws of the first Inca, and abstained from human sacrifices, offering only the blood of rams and sheep to the sun,—the Mexicans carried the severe penances ordained by Quetzalcohuatl to a higher stage, and offered human victims as the ordinary expiations of the nation and the king. As their great legislator had forbidden such sacrifices, "stopping his ears when spoken to of war, and prescribing flowers and fruits as the only acceptable tribute to the gods," it seems probable, either that some later dispensation superseded that of Quetzalcohuatl, or that a priest-caste rivetted its chains on a race of warriors by imposing upon them a formal, elaborate, and bloody ritual.

Had not the killing frost of European invasion nipped in the bud the civilisation of the Aztecs and the Peruvians alike, it is probable that each of them would have gradually absorbed all the feebler forms of Indian polity, such as that of the inhabitants of the plains of Bogota, and even that of Araucana; and while the warriors of Anahuac would have spread themselves over the Texas and Florida until they encountered, in the red men of the north, tribes as puissant as themselves, the Peruvians would have extended their milder laws and their agricultural enterprise over the south, until they also met in the nomades of the pampas with races, like those of Scythia and Sarmatia in the Old World, intolerant of repose and local habitation, and prizing beyond wealth and security their freedom to go and come. We conclude this imperfect sketch of the Indian races with the following suggestive passage from the volumes before us:

"Those who wish to study this people must turn to the ruins of the temples, or the tombs at Mitla, Palenque, and Copan; must investigate the primeval remains of buildings to be found on the borders of the vast lake of Titicaca, and the adjacent plain of Tiahuaco; must consider well the pyramids of Papantla and Cholula; and still further, ponder over the clear signs of an early and considerable civilisation which seems to have existed in a somewhat similar form in places so widely asunder as Canada and the banks of the Orinoco. It has been said, that little will be learnt to advance art or increase our knowledge of beauty from a study of any American monuments; an assertion which I think is completely contradicted by the Grecques on the temple or palace at Mitla, and still more by the recently discovered ruins of Copan.

"Putting aside, however, all questions of beauty, I have no doubt

that it is of the utmost importance that the learned should deeply investigate the monuments of America. I think I foresee a time when these and similar researches, which are being undertaken in various parts of the world, will be made to converge to a far larger knowledge of the early records of this earth than has hitherto been obtained, and will thus assist in solving some of the most important questions which exist with respect to the early peopling of the world, the migration of races, and the capabilities of different races in enduring different climates."

We must now glance briefly at the second important element in the conquest of America—the character of the conquerors themselves. In Europe generally, and in Protestant Europe especially, the Spaniard has been long regarded as the type of pride and hardness of heart. With the mercurial Frenchman he had few points in common, and their disagreement was aggravated by competition for empire. To the Italian he was a stern ruler; and although the common descendants of Philip and Jeanne la Folle occupied the palaces of Madrid and Vienna, the *solita inter fratres odia*, or at least the jealousies of rival crowns, were rife between them. By the Fleming and the Hollander the Castilian was regarded in the same light as the Jews regarded Antiochus Epiphanes, or the Christians of the second century Diocletian. Alba was with them the type of the Spanish nation, and the type also of an incarnate fiend. And among the English the Spanish national character has fared little better, since it is associated with Smithfield and the Armada, with all the crimes done in the Spanish main, and with all the cruelties and insolences committed in the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even the Peninsular war and its great results effected little towards removing these sinister prejudices; for in it the Spaniard had proved himself slothful, treacherous, and corrupt, in the field and in the cabinet, and a serviceable ally only as the fierce, fraudulent, and brutal guerilla.

It is one of the most sagacious surmises of the historian Robertson, that if the archives of American affairs were once fairly thrown open to the public, the character of the Spanish might in some measure be relieved of the stain fixed upon it by the cruelty and rapacity of the discoverers and colonists of the New World. As Robertson's materials for his history were very scanty, not even comprising all the printed documents existing in his day, his surmise was at best a happy guess. Its correctness has been confirmed by Mr. Helps, who has employed in his researches printed authorities unavailable to Robertson, and has had access to manuscripts altogether unknown to him. The character of the early colonists and explorers remains much the same; but that of the Spanish monarchs and their advisers has gained materially by the larger resources of the historian.

It now appears that, so far as the home-government was concerned, there was a strong desire to do justice to the Indians, and even a kindly disposition towards them. Neither was there so much ignorance in colonial affairs as the very novelty of the circumstances might have given reason to suppose; indeed, Mr. Helps more than once expresses his conviction, that modern colonial boards and secretaries would not have managed matters with more wisdom or humanity than Ferdinand and his councillors on some occasions displayed. We have so long been taught to regard the Arragonese monarch as a sort of royal attorney, that it is an agreeable surprise to discover that his shrewdness and selfishness were often abated by a sense of justice and sentiments of compunction, and that, in fact, the poor Indians had few better friends than the master to whom the papal bull had awarded them. His good intentions may indeed be attributed to the benign influence of Isabella of Castile, and doubtless the good seed was sown by her in his politic and not very susceptible bosom. Yet it bore fruit; since, after her decease, Ferdinand persevered in his desire to alleviate the miseries of his new subjects, and to govern his vast colonial empire with justice and even with mildness.

It was his misfortune to be misled by his informants, and ill-served by his delegates. He experienced "the common curse of kings," to be attended either by men who marred his instructions by their ignorance at home, or rendered them ineffectual by their corruption abroad. For one Columbus or Las Casas, he was forced to employ twenty Ovandos and Bobadillas. It was his misfortune also to need money for his European wars, and to live and die in the belief that the American colonies could supply him with speedy and inexhaustible returns of gold. It was the error of his age; it was the bait which even Columbus held out to the monarch, to induce him to countenance and to persevere in the discovery; it was the plea which all his councillors urged; it was the promise that every adventurer held forth when he sued for the royal commission—gold, and yet more gold. With the hope of quick returns of gold, Ferdinand, even against his own better judgment, signed his assent to the *encomiendas* and *repartimientos;* to the imposition of serfage on the Indians; to rending them from their homes; to dividing them in gangs; to overtasking them in the mine and in the maize-field; to supplying the void wrought by famine, pestilence, suicide, and the scourge, with negro labourers; to cruelties transcending the havoc of war; to privations surpassing the dearth of beleaguered cities.

We must content ourselves with merely referring to the instructions given by Ferdinand and the council for Indian affairs to Columbus, and to the laws of Burgos, enacted after some of

the worst results of the conquest had displayed themselves. The former are conceived in the more humane spirit: the latter, though not without consideration for the oppressed, evince a more callous temper in the legislators. The same radical vice appears in them both,—the assumption of a right to the persons and the labour of the Indians.

It was indeed an assumption deeply rooted in the social prejudices of the times, derived from antiquity, transmitted in the writings of Aristotle—"the master of the wise" in the middle ages —accepted by all European legislators, prevalent throughout Asia, and unquestioned until negro-emancipation first established the principle that no circumstances justify the making or the holding of slaves. From the original guilt of this error the Spaniards in the sixteenth century are exempt. It was in the abuse of the assumed right that their guilt consisted. We shall perhaps be enabled to understand the dealings of the conquerors with the conquered more clearly, by reverting to the national characteristics of the Spaniards at this period, and to the causes that produced them. In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Spaniards were almost as isolated and peculiar a people as the Hebrew race itself. Except in the great commercial cities of Cadiz and Barcelona, they had little intercourse with the rest of Europe. Within the rocky basins of their own sierras the provinces of the peninsula had little communication with one another. Local jealousies were rife: the Castilian looked askance at the Estremaduran; the natives of Biscay had no dealings with those of Andalusia. In no land did the pride of birth so much assume the aspect of a passion. The least admixture of Moorish blood was as repulsive to a pure Goth, in whose veins flowed the *sangre azul*, as the least tint of negro hue is to the precisians of New York and Boston. A descendant of Pelayo's followers would have deemed himself less dishonoured by a blow than by the friendly grasp of a Jew; and the lowest Manchegan serf was as proud of being an "old Christian" as a German baron of his sixteen quarterings. To the prejudices of birth and soil were added those of religion. All the nations of the earth admitted the supremacy of the Church, but, in his own esteem, the Spaniard was most Catholic. His antipathies clung to him even when serving his country abroad. The French he hated for his levity; the German and the Englishman for their gross meals and deep potations; the Fleming he accounted a huckster; the Italian a coward or an atheist. The contempt which he felt for the nations of Christendom was not likely to relax in favour of races who sat in outer darkness. To the Jew the oracles of God had once been confided; the Saracen professed to reverence the patriarchs and the lawgiver of the Old Testament; but the Indians had been from the beginning the

children of Satan, without law and without God in their world; and were given into the hands of the true believers, as the Canaanites had been of yore to the posterity of Jacob. So the Castilian in the sixteenth century thought and acted. Yet we should do him, or rather his nation, great injustice, if we thus concluded the reckoning of his qualities. Great virtues as well as great vices appertained to him. It was possible to hate, but hardly possible to despise him. In courage he was undaunted, in enterprise unwearied; his faith was sincere; his loyalty without blemish; and his very arrogance was a mark or an excess of self-respect.

Neither should the Spanish people be measured by the standard of the adventurers who flocked to the New World. Among the explorers and colonists were many both lay and secular for whom neither society nor religion need to blush,—men whom the most virtuous of commonwealths might rank among its heroes, and the least superstitious of churches adopt as its saints. But if camps are frequently the refuge of the most restless and ungovernable of spirits, much more so are expeditions of conquest and colonisation. The family-tie and the state-tie are alike relaxed, if not altogether broken: an adventurer cares not for the opinion of his neighbours or the rebuke of his household. He bears with him the arts and the strength of civilisation; but he himself returns, in some degree, to the freedom of the nomad. Mr. Helps's volumes abound in anecdotes of the early life and training of the more conspicuous pioneers of the conquest. Some, like Ojeda, were notorious for their physical strength; others, like Vasco Nuñez, were runaway debtors: this one had made his native place too hot to hold him; and another had set at naught the vice-chancellor and proctors of the university. The greater expeditions, like that of Cortes, were conducted by picked men; the importance of the venture demanding a careful choice of instruments. But the less extensive and systematic discoveries were undertaken by men resembling those who resorted to David in the cave of Adullam; "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented," flocked to the banner of some leader as reckless as themselves. Over such spirits the home-government had no control: and often a new region was explored and its inhabitants were expelled, enslaved, or even exterminated, before the council of the Indies could interfere, or the crown take them under its protection.

It has been so usual to regard the Spanish monarchy as an unmixed despotism, and historians have so often confounded the powers exercised by Ferdinand the Catholic with those usurped by his successors after the battle at Villalar had crushed the liberties of Spain, that the reader who is not previously cognisant

of the change may remark, with some surprise, how accessible Ferdinand was to the petitions, the representations, and even the rebuke of his subjects. Las Casas, after ineffectual patience in the antechamber, makes his way at last to the royal closet, and states the grievances of his Indian clients with freedom and favourable acceptance. Ferdinand is willing and even eager to listen to evidence, and puts what he has collected fairly before his council. His soldiers retain the freedom of their Gothic ancestors; and his priests are rather the directors than the keepers of his conscience.

> "He was reckoned
> The wisest prince that there had reigned by many
> A year before:"

but his wisdom was not the cunning of his great-grandson Philip; and, compared with the jealousy and seclusion of the Escurial under his successor, Ferdinand was as free to all men as when justice was administered in the city-gates.

There are few more tragic stories than that of the conquest of America; there is no more mournful spectacle than the long decrepitude of Spain; and history affords no more appalling example of the nemesis which impends equally over guilty households and guilty nations. Writing of the Indians as they appeared to the first explorers, Mr. Helps employs the following remarkable words: "In many parts of America the manners and perhaps the whole aspect of the people would have given a traveller the notion of persons of decayed fortune, who had once been more prosperous and formidable than they were now, or who had been the offshoot of a more defined and forcible people." Is not this the very aspect of the Spaniards at the present moment? the very burden of the poet's reproach?

> "Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,
> How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!
> Art thou too fallen, Iberia? do we see
> The robber and the murderer weak as we?
> Thou that hast wasted earth, and dared despise
> Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies;
> Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
> Low in the pits thine avarice has made:
> We come with joy from our eternal rest
> To see the oppressor in his turn oppressed."

The armies of Spain are no longer formidable to Europe; her navy is scarcely sufficient to defend any one of her principal harbours; her credit has sunk; her commerce is departed; no plate-fleet annually recruits her exchequer; no vice-roys depart from her shores; no slaves delve in her mines. Her chiefest of cities are too wide for their scanty population, and by their gloom and silence recall to the traveller the stillness of Bagdad and the sadness of Ispahan. Spain, since the reign of Philip II., has

not only looked to the past, but also rested on the past. Rejecting all change, she has become herself a monument of change. She that sat as a queen is now least among the nations: she that ruled in Ophir is a lazar on the earth.

On reverting to what we have written, we feel aware of some injustice to Mr. Helps. We have been dwelling upon the elements rather than upon the contents of his book. But inasmuch as the author himself has intimated that the distribution of the races in the New World first turned his attention to the subject of their conquest, and since the character of the conquerors formed also an important feature in their dealings with the conquered, we have sought to bring prominently forward the central point of his observation, and securely commend the details of his narrative to our readers. Our limits forbade us to indulge in the pleasure of entering Mr. Helps's portrait-gallery, and drawing from his masterly sketches of Columbus, Cortes, Las Casas, of the vice-roys of the New World, of the councils which drew up their instructions, of the shrewd yet not hard Ferdinand, and of the beautiful and bounteous Isabella. We know of few undertakings more difficult than the one which he has, in our opinion, so far successfully performed—the telling over again an oft-repeated tale. We can imagine few discoveries more agreeable than to have discerned that, without supplanting any earlier labourer, there was still room in the field for fresh speculation and research. Hitherto the conquerors alone have occupied the foreground: in these pages their history forms but a portion of the narrative; and we are led to contemplate not only their deeds, but the result also of their actions. We trust that we may very shortly possess a record by the same hand of the conquest of South America, and survey the civilisation of the Incas under the guidance of a writer who has so ably delineated the fiercer and less attractive empire of Anahuac.

Art. III.—THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DR. THOMAS YOUNG.

Life of Thomas Young, M.D., F.R.S., &c. By George Peacock, D.D., Dean of Ely, &c. 8vo. London, Murray, 1855.

The Miscellaneous Works of Dr. T. Young. Edited by G. Peacock, D.D., Dean of Ely, and John Leitch, Esq. 3 vols. 8vo. London, Murray, 1855.

The name of Thomas Young, up to the present time, has been hardly known among his countrymen beyond a circle, extensive no doubt, of private friends and men of science. Yet he was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary men of whom the present or any age can boast. His celebrity, however, is probably becoming greater every day; and the recent, though long-promised, publication of his life by the master hand of the Dean of Ely, accompanying a reprint of his varied and numerous miscellaneous works, under the able editorship of Mr. Leitch, hitherto only found scattered through a wide range of periodicals, some of them little known or difficult to procure, will probably do much to secure for his name its just place among the most eminent cultivators of literature and discoverers in science; while his personal history, now first exhibited in detail, will evince the wonderful variety and extent of his manifold attainments and high qualities and endowments, moral, intellectual, and physical, so as fairly to place him in the very highest rank of talent and accomplishment in the estimation of readers of all classes. In the wish to further such an object, we propose in the present article in the first instance to give a sketch of his personal history, after which we shall offer a brief analysis of some of his chief literary and scientific labours.

He was born at Milverton in Somersetshire, June 13, 1773, of a family belonging to the Society of Friends, and was brought up in a strict adherence to the tenets of that sect. His intellectual development was rapid, and from his earliest years, what particularly strikes us is the unusual *quantity* of reading he describes himself as going through; he had, for example, read *through* the Bible *twice* before he was four years old! besides other books. He learned by heart at that age a vast amount of English poetry. In his seventh year he went to a school at Stapleton, near Bristol, where his progress in a year and a half was equally wonderful. In that time, previously knowing nothing of Latin, he learned all Lilly's grammar, and

read *through* two books of Phædrus, besides a variety of English works. He next resided at home, and acquired new tastes and ideas as to some elements of mathematical and mechanical science from an acquaintance formed with a neighbouring land-surveyor. The details of this portion of his life are furnished from an autobiographical sketch written in Latin at the age of fourteen, which goes on to inform us, that in the next year (1782) he was removed to the school of Mr. Thompson, at Compton, in Dorsetshire, where in four years, again we are astonished at the mere *amount* of reading he went through, not less than at its miscellaneous character. Every book so perused is minutely entered on his list; and besides this, he acquired from the usher, an ingenious man, some practical acquaintance with optical and electrical instruments, besides painting and other branches of the arts. From another individual he acquired some taste for barometrical observation, as well as for botany and microscopic researches; and finding in some experimental book a calculation for which fluxions were necessary, he forthwith read through a treatise on that branch of mathematics. His classical knowledge at this time did not include prosody; but this he acquired afterwards. He, however, learnt Italian and French; and on leaving the school, returned home to the study of Hebrew, telescope-making, and turning, and soon extended his acquirements to Chaldee, Syriac, and Persian.

In 1787, an arrangement was made for his partaking in the instruction of a private tutor along with Mr. Hudson Gurney, then a youth of his own age, residing with his grandfather, Mr. Barclay, at Youngsbury in Hertfordshire. The tutor was Mr. Hodgkin, the author of the *Calligraphia Græca*. Here his classical studies were resumed on a more accurate system; and notwithstanding a remark of his biographer, that his reading was select rather than extensive, we are still struck by the *number* of the books he read, not less than by the regularity and assiduity with which their contents appear to have been mastered. His MS. journals attest the earnestness with which these studies were carried on, and exhibit many original remarks and reflections called forth in the course of them.

The books enumerated, we must own, seem in some instances oddly selected and associated, especially as regards the mathematical portion of his studies; he had already read fluxions, yet we find him now studying Simson's Euclid, conic sections, algebra, and popular astronomy! His intense application seemed likely to injure his health; but relaxation for a time, and medical care, soon restored him.

About this time we find his uncle, Dr. Brocklesby, taking an especial interest in his pursuits; and an unbroken correspond-

ence maintained between the uncle and nephew from this date till the death of the former forms one of the most interesting features in his life, many extracts being given which attest the value of the intercourse so carried on, and convey a pleasing picture of the affectionate solicitude of the elder relation, and the due sense of it entertained by the object of his care.

During the two years from 1790 to 1792 (when he finally quitted Youngsbury), the list of books *read through* is appalling. It is to our minds difficult to conceive how the mere mechanical process of carrying the eye through such a mass of lines and pages, without reference to other considerations, could have been effected within the given time. It would form a problem for calculation, which we should be unwilling to enter upon. For instance, besides some thirty authors, classical and scientific, the *whole* of Newton's *Principia* is mentioned, which we do not believe that a student even of considerable powers could really master in a much longer space of time, even without interruption from other pursuits; yet, among the other works read in the same time, the *whole* of the Greek tragedians, and Blackstone's *Commentaries*, are casually set down! small morsels swallowed by the way,—stimulants to the mental appetite! Nevertheless, his biographer assures us that he read nothing hastily or cursorily; his memory was tenacious, and whatever he had once mastered he never forgot; besides his reading, too, he always composed exercises in the languages he studied, and wrote journals of all his proceedings!

In 1792, Young gave perhaps the earliest proof of his classical attainments and literary powers in some translations from Shakspeare into Greek in imitation of the Greek tragedians, which were much lauded by competent scholars; though, as is usual in such cases, acute critics did not fail to pounce on some real or suspected false quantities or solecisms in style. An amusing account is also given of a conversation among a select circle, in which he met Porson, and was fully able to sustain his part in remarks called forth by questions of various readings, and the niceties of Greek metres.

In the same year he removed to London (having determined on following the medical profession), in order to attend the usual course at the hospitals. Here his connection with Dr. Brocklesby, then in considerable repute as a physician, opened to him the acquaintance of many of the leading persons of the day in literature and science. He found leisure still to carry on his classical studies; he also pursued a physiological and optical inquiry into the disputed question of the power of the eye to adapt itself to distinct vision for objects at different distances. This formed the subject of his first paper communicated to the Royal Society,

and facilitated his admission into that body in 1794. Among other eminent persons, he had become favourably known to the Duke of Richmond, then Master of the Ordnance, who offered him the situation of private secretary; but on mature consideration this offer was declined; and in pursuit of his originally destined profession he next removed to Edinburgh, with a view to attend the medical lectures of that far-famed school. In his way thither he made a tour in the north of England, and in almost all parts formed acquaintance with persons of eminence; more especially was this the case on his arrival at Edinburgh, then distinguished by the residence of several professors of high celebrity, besides other literary and scientific characters. He here carried on with his usual diligence, not only the regular professional studies which were his immediate object, but a variety of miscellaneous researches, besides journals and correspondence, more especially Greek criticism; his proficiency showing itself, as on several other occasions, in effusions in Greek verse. It was during his sojourn in Edinburgh that a material change took place in his habits; renouncing the *externals* of the sect in which he had been brought up, and scandalising some of his more rigid connections by taking lessons in dancing and music, and frequenting the theatre; yet (as his biographer assures us) without the smallest detriment to his religious or moral principles.

During the summer recess he made a tour in the north of Scotland on horseback; the picture which he draws of himself and his accoutrements for the journey must be given in his own words to convey the complete idea of the man, as a friend expressed it, "*in se totus teres atque rotundus*," equipped for the Highlands.

"I was mounted on a stout well-made black horse, fourteen hands high, young and spirited, which I had purchased from my friend Cathcart. I had before me my oiled linens, the spencer with a separate camlet-cover; under me a pair of saddle-bags, well filled with three or four changes of linen, a waistcoat and breeches, materials for writing and for drawing, paper, pens, ink, pencils, and colours, packing-paper and twine for minerals; soap-brushes and a razor; a small edition of Thomson's *Seasons;* a third flute in a bag; some music, principally Scotch, bound with some blank music-paper; wafers, a box for botanising, a thermometer; two little bottles with spirits for preserving insects; a bag for picking up stones; two maps of Scotland, Ainslie's small one, and Sayer's; letters of recommendation. The bags had pockets at the end; one containing a pair of shoes, the other boards, with straps, and paper for drying plants. I found my bags at first an incumbrance, but became afterwards more reconciled to them. They are to a saddle what pockets are to a coat; and who objects to wearing pockets? But they were wetted the first day, and stained their contents: this will make me more careful in future."—p. 63.

In 1795 Young embarked for Germany, to perfect his medical studies at Göttingen. He gives amusing accounts of his impressions as to the general tone of society and state of literature and science in that celebrated seat of learning. The programme of his course of study is somewhat remarkable from the large admixture of other lessons with the medical; music, drawing, dancing, and above all equitation, including the most remarkable feats of horsemanship, form essential parts of the academical curriculum; every one of them being set down as to be followed up with a seriousness and spirit of emulation fully equalling that displayed in the pursuit of the legitimate objects of medical education. Greek versification continued to be a prominent and favourite occupation, as well as lectures on politics and general literature. The confidence and decision with which he gives his criticisms on the several professors seem fully sustained by the proficiency which all seem to admit he evinced in these singularly diversified branches of accomplishment; and at length, with a characteristic sketch of the mode in which an examination was conducted in those days, we find him emerging in the full honours of the medical degree.

After evincing his wonderful powers of agility, not only in riding two horses at once and other like feats, but in enacting with unparalleled applause at a court masquerade at Brunswick the character of Harlequin, we find him continuing his travels through most of the German principalities, and meditating a still more extended tour; which, however, was put a stop to by the approaching symptoms of war: and in 1797 he returned to England.

He was now twenty-four years of age; but in order to obtain the footing of a physician practising in London, it was necessary, according to the then existing regulations, that he should graduate at one of the English universities. Why he did not at an earlier period, and more suitable age, take the step of entering at one of those seats of learning, does not appear; but he perhaps had not at first any very settled plans, and this may have been an after-thought. The University of Cambridge at that time allowed of some modifications in its usual routine, by which students of the class in which he would be ranked were permitted certain indulgences in regard to the usual requirements of the academical course. Some colleges held out particular attractions in this respect, and he therefore, immediately after his return, entered himself as a Fellow Commoner at Emmanuel College.

From recollections of his mode of life when at Cambridge, a fellow of his college has put on record a highly characteristic sketch of Young's peculiarities, to which he was by no means inclined to be indulgent. We will give a few extracts from the most striking parts:

"When the master introduced Young to his tutors, he jocularly said, 'I have brought you a pupil qualified to read lectures to his tutors.' This, however, as might be concluded, he did not attempt: and the forbearance was mutual; he was never required to attend the common duties of the college.

. . . . I remember his meeting Dr. Parr in the college combination-room; and when the doctor had made, as was not unusual with him, some dogmatical observation on a point of scholarship, Young said firmly, 'Bentley, sir, was of a different opinion,' immediately quoting his authority, and showing his intimate knowledge of the subject. Parr said nothing; but when Dr. Young retired, asked who he was; and though he did not seem to have heard his name before, he said, 'A smart young man that.'

. . . . The views, objects, character, and acquirements of our mathematicians were very different then to what they are now, and Young, who was certainly beforehand with the world, perceived their defects. Certain it is that he looked down upon the science, and would not cultivate the acquaintance of any of our philosophers. Wood's books I have heard him speak of with approbation; but Vince he treated with contempt, and he afterwards returned the compliment. I recollect once asking Vince his opinion of Young; he said, he knew nothing correctly. 'What can you think,' says he, 'of a man writing upon mechanics who does not know the principle of a coach-wheel?' This alludes to a mistake of Dr. Young's on this subject in his *Natural Philosophy*.

. . . . I remember having invited him to meet at dinner Mr. Whiter, of Clare Hall, who, though an admirable scholar, was a wit and a *bon-vivant*, while Young took no delight in the pleasures of the table, and never could either make a joke or understand one. Whiter quoted something from the *Oxford Sausage;* and when our philosopher betrayed his ignorance of the existence of such a work, with his total inability to taste or relish the allusion, it was almost painful to witness the ridicule which he was obliged to sustain; but, to do him justice, he did sustain it with perfect good-humour.

He never obtruded his various learning in conversation; but if appealed to on the most difficult subject, he answered in a quick, flippant, decisive way, as if he was speaking of the most easy; and in this mode of talking he differed from all the clever men that I ever saw. His reply never seemed to cost him an effort, and he did not appear to think there was any credit in being able to make it. He did not assert any superiority, or seem to suppose that he possessed it; but spoke as if he took it for granted that we all understood the matter as well as he did. He never spoke in praise of any of the writers of the day, even in his own peculiar department, and could not be persuaded to discuss their merits. He was never personal. He would speak of knowledge in itself, of what was known or what might be known, but never of himself, or any other, as having discovered any thing, or as likely to do so.

His language was correct, his utterance rapid, and his sentences,

though without any affectation, never left unfinished. But his words were not those in familiar use, and the arrangement of his ideas seldom the same as those he conversed with. He was, therefore, worse calculated than any man I ever knew for the communication of knowledge. . . . . I remember his taking me with him to the Royal Institution to hear him lecture to a number of silly women and *dilettante* philosophers. But nothing could show less judgment than the method he adopted; for he presumed, like many other lecturers and preachers, on the knowledge, and not on the ignorance of his hearers.

In his manners he had something of the stiffness of the quaker remaining; and though he never said or did a rude thing, he never made use of any of the forms of politeness. Not that he avoided them through affectation; his behaviour was natural without timidity, and easy without boldness. He rarely associated with the young men of the college, who called him, with a mixture of derision and respect, 'Phenomenon Young;' but he lived on familiar terms with the fellows in the common room. He had few friends of his own age or pursuits in the university; and not having been introduced to many of those who were distinguished either by their situation or talent, he did not seek their society, nor did they seek him. They did not like to admit the superiority of any one *in statu pupillari;* and he would not converse with any one but as an equal.

It was difficult to say how he employed himself; he read little, and though he had access to the college and university libraries, he was seldom seen in them. There were no books piled on his floor, no papers scattered on his table, and his room had all the appearance of belonging to an idle man. I once found him blowing smoke through long tubes, and I afterwards saw a representation of the effect in the *Transactions of the Royal Society*, to illustrate one of his papers on sound; but he was not in the habit of making experiments. He walked little, and rode less; but having learnt to ride the great horse abroad, he used to *pace* round Parker's Piece on a hackney; he once made an attempt to follow the hounds, but a severe fall prevented any further exhibition.

He seldom gave an opinion, and never volunteered one. He never laid down the law like other learned doctors, or uttered apothegms or sayings to be remembered. Indeed, like most mathematicians—though we hear of abstract mathematics—he never seemed to think abstractedly. A philosophical fact, a difficult calculation, an ingenious instrument, or a new invention, would engage his attention; but he never spoke of morals, of metaphysics, or of religion."—*Life*, p. 116.

When in Germany, he casually mentions, among his other studies, his varied feats of horsemanship and tight-rope dancing, attendance on lectures and iambic effusions, that he read Kant,—but speaks of him in a very slighting tone; which fully accords with the observation of his Cambridge friend.

These recollections, characteristic as they manifestly are, seem to require some little qualification before we can entirely adopt the portrait; especially in respect to Young's employment

of his time. That he did not pile books on his floor, or litter his table with papers, is merely an instance of his characteristic minute neatness and attention to order. It would have been altogether at variance with his unalterable habits that he should be an idle man at any time, more especially in the midst of a place furnishing such ample means and inducements for study. In fact, he must at this time have been engaged on the subjects of many of those essays and communications which so soon afterwards appeared in memoirs of societies or the scientific periodicals. It was, however, quite in character that he should carefully avoid all affectation of being a studious man, or all display of the apparatus of study.

Soon after he was settled at Cambridge (in December 1797), a material change was made in Young's prospects by the death of his uncle, Dr. Brocklesby, who bequeathed him a handsome fortune, not indeed very large, but apparently sufficient to render him independent in his choice of a course of life. We have no evidence put before us by his biographer as to the motives which may have actuated him; but we find him still regularly continuing to keep his terms at Cambridge—though residing much in London—until in due course he passed through the requisite degrees in arts, and subsequently in medicine. In 1800 he first commenced practice in London, though he had not as yet actually graduated as M.D., having taken up his abode in a house in Welbeck Street, which he continued to occupy for twenty-five years. His attention was certainly distracted from purely medical pursuits, as it always had been, by an extensive devotion to a variety of literary and scientific subjects, more especially those of a mathematical and physical kind; which it would seem hardly possible for him not to have seen must tend to interfere with his professional success, dependent as it necessarily is in so large a degree on the mere caprice of the public, especially dependent on the notion, often extremely ill-founded, of the degree in which the practitioner exclusively devotes himself to professional avocations; a notion which would hardly be modified by the transparent anonymous disguise which he assumed in his various publications.

In 1799 he communicated to the Royal Society his paper on "Sound and Light," containing the germ of his after-discoveries. In the following year it appeared in the *Transactions*, and was succeeded by several others on allied subjects, to which we shall refer more particularly in the sequel. A number of minor essays on mathematical, physical, and literary subjects were soon after given to the world in periodicals.

But the great work in which he engaged at this period was his *Lectures on Natural Philosophy;* the substance of a course which he delivered in the theatre of the Royal Institution, where he had

been appointed professor in that department. The fate of the *lectures* and of the *work* has been very different: the former were ill-attended, and soon ceased to attract; while the latter has become more highly valued the more it has been known, as containing the condensed results of profound and extensive inquiries into all branches of physical science, and of which it has been truly observed, even at the present day, no student in any branch ought to be ignorant; as, from the number of profound suggestions and the accumulated references to all that has been done in each subject, it will always form an invaluable source of information, and must be regarded as a standard work in our scientific literature. That lectures of so profound and condensed a character should not have been popular, is easily understood; they were beyond the capacity of the audience, and were not set off by any attractions in the manner of the lecturer. The style was indeed precise, and clear to one conversant with the subject; but wholly wanting in that freedom of illustration, discursive allusion, and simplicity of structure, which are requisite to arrest and retain the attention of a mixed audience. The lectures, moreover, were written out *in extenso*, and read, not spoken; which alone would deprive them of that life and familiarity which is so essential in this kind of delivery.

These lectures occupied the year 1802, in which year also he was named Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society—an office which he continued to hold through his life. Ten years later he was urged to accept the principal secretaryship; but declined, on the ground that it might interfere with his professional success; an apparently somewhat strange allegation, when his pursuits altogether seemed to have so decided a tendency of the same kind.

In 1804 he resigned the professorship at the Royal Institution. The lectures were not published till 1807. His *Syllabus of the Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* was printed in 1802, and afterwards incorporated in his *Illustrations of Laplace* in 1821; a work on which Dr. Peacock makes some critical remarks,* questioning its utility in a way natural to one accustomed to the more rigid school of mathematics, but, perhaps, hardly enough allowing for the requirements of general readers, whose object may be to attain a comprehensive view of the foundations of science rather than the regular exercise of mathematical habits of investigation.

Young's essay on *Cohesion of Fluids* was communicated to the Royal Society in 1804, and was followed by the publication of some severe criticisms on the subsequent investigations of Laplace, as well as some minor contributions: this, however, was but one of the many and varied researches on physical sub-

* Life, p. 191.

jects which continued to occupy him, in spite of his often-expressed determination to devote himself to his profession.

In the summer of the same year Dr. Young married Miss Eliza Maxwell, a lady who, to other attractions and good qualities, added that of a full appreciation of her husband's attainments, and a deep and intelligent interest in the success of his pursuits. It appears to have been a thoroughly congenial union. To the unreserved and lively correspondence which Young kept up with his three sisters-in-law we owe some of the most striking and entertaining passages in his memoirs.

Meanwhile his professional practice advanced; but probably not with much rapidity or general success. Every summer he adjourned to Worthing, and there practised as well as in London. In 1807 he gave medical lectures at the Middlesex Hospital, which we are left to infer were not more *popular* than his former course; though, we doubt not, as solid and excellent. The preparation of these lectures, and the examination of candidates, he somewhat characteristically describes as "amusements, which, besides the more serious employments of parties, concerts, and dances, really give me very little more spare time than is necessary for visiting my patients." Notwithstanding, he was in 1811 elected one of the physicians to St. George's Hospital—a situation which he retained to the end of his life. The students' verdict was, "Dr. Young is a great philosopher, but a bad physician:" an impression which his biographer takes some pains to combat, but not, we think, very successfully.

In 1814 he produced an elaborate report, the result of the inquiries of a commission issued by the Admiralty, on Sepping's improvements in ship-building. The reply of an official is characteristic: "Though science is much respected by their lordships, and your paper is much esteemed by them, it is too learned."

In 1816 he was named secretary to a commission for ascertaining the length of the seconds' pendulum, as the basis of a system of measures. To the labours of this, and another commission on the alleged dangers of gas, he added those of superintendent of the Nautical Almanac, and secretary to the Board of Longitude, to which he was appointed in 1818. The entire management of that publication, and of the Board itself, became shortly after the subject of much acrimonious controversy, into the merits of which our limits forbid our entering; but the details constitute one of the most interesting portions of Dr. Peacock's work. We anticipate the order of time to observe, that when the Board was abolished in 1828, Dr. Young was retained by the Admiralty in the capacity of superintendent of the Almanac, and continued unhappily engaged in an irritating controversy respecting its management to the period of his death.

In 1821 he made a tour on the Continent, and was honourably and warmly received by the *savans* at Paris.

In 1824 he was appointed by the Palladium Insurance Company to the office of physician and inspector of calculations, with a salary of 400*l.* a year, he having declined what would probably have been a far more lucrative offer of shares. This led him to extensive investigations on the subject of the value of life, published in several essays and reports. Besides these, numerous articles on a variety of subjects concerning hydraulics, mechanics, and engineering, were about this period composed for different journals and encyclopædias. The most remarkable of these, perhaps, is his article on the Tides, in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

In 1826, on some accession of fortune, he removed to a larger house in Park Square, and in the same year received the very distinguished honour of being elected one of the eight foreign associates of the French Academy of Sciences. On the retirement of Sir H. Davy from the chair of the Royal Society, he was talked of as his successor, but evinced no wish for the situation, which was, as is well known, conferred on Mr. Davies Gilbert. Dr. Young's great attainments as a classical scholar and general philologist were conspicuously displayed in his various researches, partly of a classical, partly of an antiquarian character, on various ancient inscriptions, especially some from Pompeii, and in deciphering the Herculaneum Mss.: many of these researches were communicated to various societies and journals, others appeared as articles in the *Quarterly Review.* It would be impossible, within our limits, to go into any examination of them. In fact, during the later period of his life, there was hardly any topic of high literary interest which did not more or less engage his attention. But the subject which most especially occupied him was the interpretation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, to which we shall revert in the sequel.

The account of the last few months of his life is supplied from a memoir by his intimate friend, Mr. Hudson Gurney. For some years he had suffered much from asthma, and in February 1829 the attacks became so violent as to cause great alarm, and reduced him to a state of extreme weakness. He, however, continued to amuse himself, as he termed it, by literary avocations, especially the completion of his Egyptian Dictionary. He was perfectly aware of his danger, but evinced the utmost calmness and self-possession. He observed, "that he had taken the sacraments of the church" on the day preceding, and could patiently await the issue of his disorder. He gradually sank, and died on May 10, 1829.

Ample and varied as are the illustrations afforded by these

memoirs of the *intellectual* endowments of this remarkable man, they are very defective in affording any *direct* elucidation of the higher question of his *moral* and *religious* character and sentiments. As to the former, we easily collect from the tenor of the narrative that he was a person of a naturally imperturbable temper; even amid neglect and disappointment, disparagement and controversial attacks, he always maintained the same calm tone in his manner towards his opponents; if ever temporarily irritated, he never knew a feeling of lasting enmity or ill-will. He was on all occasions actuated by the most strict and conscientious principles of rectitude and honour. He felt no temptation to excess or intemperance,—so commonly indulged in in his younger days,—and he was a person of irreproachable moral purity. But, without any disparagement, we may be permitted to surmise, that his virtue was rather of that negative cast which is associated with a passionless constitution.

He delighted in the society of lively and accomplished women; but there is not an indication of his having experienced a warmer impulse. His gallantry was, indeed, displayed on one occasion, when a young lady had inscribed some lines in a summer-house (throwing out a delicate hint of the writer's unhappiness), by placing under them, not an impassioned reply, but—a translation of them into Greek elegiacs! His marriage is expressly described by his biographer as one "of mutual affection and esteem;" but at the same time we are told, "he attached himself to the members of his wife's family with more than the ordinary affection of son and brother-in-law, more especially to her three sisters." He had no children.

As to his religious views, though we would be the last to indulge in a prying curiosity into what a man may wish to conceal in the inmost recesses of his soul in precise proportion to the depth and sincerity of his convictions, yet we cannot forbear the wish to know how the most important of all questions was viewed by a mind of such high powers. On this subject almost nothing is made known in the course of these extended memoirs. Two disclosures only, of the most brief kind, afford a foundation for conjecture. The somewhat cynical Cambridge tutor before quoted says, "He never spoke of morals, of metaphysics, or of religion. Of the last I never heard him say a word,—nothing in favour of any sect, or in opposition to any doctrine; at the same time, no sceptical doubt, no loose assertion, no idle scoff ever escaped him."* The other intimation we have already cited in his own words, just before his death, "I have taken the sacraments of the church, and can patiently abide the issue." These are absolutely the only indications of his religious ideas which we can

* Life, p. 119.

discover. The inference we should be disposed to draw would be only that which the analogy of his general character would supply.

The whole cast of his mind was of a positive, matter-of-fact character. He had no taste or capacity for abstract inquiry, especially on metaphysical or moral subjects, where demonstrative certainty is unattainable; hence speculative theology could not interest him; he could have no intimate feeling or concern about points of belief; and, in a practical point of view, a correct morality he uniformly acknowledged and consistently practised. All religious principles beyond these he regarded rather at a distance, yet with the utmost respect and reverence. Any sectarian peculiarities were, of course, as such repulsive to him; and he cast them off as soon as he was independent. He was fully satisfied to acquiesce without question in the conventional requisitions of the established creed and worship, such as they might be. His remark in his last moments, just quoted, is eminently characteristic, even to the very phrase.

Having thus sketched the personal history of Dr. Young, and given some general notion of the almost incredible amount and variety of his literary and scientific labours, we shall proceed to a more particular yet condensed view of the two grand subjects which are prominently conspicuous among them, and with which his name will always be more pre-eminently associated,—his researches on the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and his discoveries in physical optics, leading to the first establishment of a connected mathematical theory of light.

The celebrated inscription on a block of stone found at Rosetta during the expedition to Egypt, and now deposited in the British Museum, is probably well known to most of our readers, even the least curious in these matters, as containing three inscriptions: the first in hieroglyphics, the second in what is termed the "enchorial" or ordinary characters of ancient Egypt, the third in Greek, which states them to be all to the same purport. Hence the antiquary at once sees open to him the prospect, not only of deciphering the unknown contents of the hieroglyphic and Egyptian records from the known Greek, but of establishing at least some general principles of the interpretation of the enigma of hieroglyphics, so tempting even to popular imagination, and of the hardly less enigmatical and doubtful mode of writing practised by the ancient Egyptians. The stone, as is well known, is considerably mutilated, especially at the *beginning* of the hieroglyphics and at the *end* of the Greek; so that only a portion could be expected to receive such elucidation. Yet the eminent scholars Heyne and Porson gave conjectural restorations of the lost parts of the Greek.

The investigation of the hieroglyphics and the enchorial parts soon began to occupy the attention of the eminent orientalist Silvestre de Sacy,—of Akerblad, a Swedish antiquarian and scholar,—and afterwards of Champollion and others. Dr. Young was among the first who gave attention to the subject, and by diligent comparison, within the course of the year 1814, was enabled to give a conjectural translation. This, however, must be understood as referring generally to the substance; for the main difficulty, of course, was to decipher the verbal construction or solution into individual characters, and the correspondence of those words or letters with the hieroglyphic symbols. It was in this more delicate inquiry that the whole difficulty and the source of all the subsequent controversies was found. His translation was printed anonymously; and a revised version of it appeared in the Cambridge *Museum Criticum*, in 1816.

The attempt to identify the enchorial characters with the corresponding hieroglyphics proceeded more slowly, and, sanguine as were the expectations entertained at first, both Young and the other inquirers soon found the wisdom and necessity of concentrating their attention on the perfect verification of a very few forms in the first instance, as a clue to the rest.

With reference to the conflicting claims set up to the elucidation of these remarkable inscriptions, those of Dr. Young are thus maintained by his biographer:

"It was Dr. Young who first determined, and by no easy process, that the 'rings'* on the Rosetta stone contained the name of Ptolemy; it was Dr. Young who determined that the semicircle and oval found at the end of the second ring in connection with the former were expressive of the feminine gender; and it was Dr. Young who had not only first suggested that the characters in the ring of Ptolemy were phonetic, but had determined, with one very unimportant inaccuracy, the values of four of those which were common to the name of Cleopatra, which was required to be analysed. All the principles involved in the discovery of an alphabet of phonetic hieroglyphics were not only distinctly laid down, but fully exemplified by him; and it only required the further identification of one or two royal names with the rings, which expressed them in hieroglyphics, to extend the alphabet already known sufficiently to bring even names which were not already identified under its operation."

There can be no doubt (as Dr. Peacock justly observes) that one of the principal objects of Young's researches as to the correspondence between the different characters used in the several forms of Egyptian writing, was to identify, if possible, the corresponding hieroglyphical and enchorial characters, sufficiently to

* Certain portions of the hieroglyphical characters are found surrounded by a ring or enclosure, called by the French *cartouches*.

enable him to reconstruct the deficient parts of the first inscription on the Rosetta stone, by replacing the characters in the enchorial text, one by one, by corresponding hieroglyphics. But it was soon evident even to himself that he did not possess the requisite means for carrying on such a work; the solution of a problem which (as Dr. Peacock says) the most learned of Egyptologers would even now regard with no small alarm.

Dr. Young's article "Egypt," in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, published in 1819, contains the most comprehensive survey of his labours and conclusions on the subject of hieroglyphic literature up to that date. It does not profess to go into those minutiæ of critical detail, for which reference must be made to his numerous other writings on the subject; but as a general and popular view it will always be consulted with advantage. Nevertheless the reader must always bear in mind, that in the statements there given much has to be revised, or even reversed, from the improved disclosures of his later researches.

Next to the Rosetta stone, the most important discovery perhaps was that of the funereal papyri. One of these had long existed (little known) in the museum of Turin; another was discovered by the French expedition to Egypt in the tombs of the kings at Thebes. They both contain pictured representations of funeral ceremonies, and are probably allegorical representations of the conditions of the departed spirit. These are illustrative of the text, which is in hieroglyphics. Dr. Young, by the aid of the principles he had laid down, succeeded in throwing much light on their probable meaning as ritual-books, and in showing that they were probably identical with the sacred books of Hermes or Thoth, mentioned by Diodorus and Clement of Alexandria. In these researches he was followed by Champollion and Lepsius, to whom, nevertheless, Chevalier Bunsen assigns the priority, with scarcely any mention of Young;* which it is matter of equal surprise and regret to observe in a writer occupying deservedly so high a position in the public estimation, whether as to his literary or his personal qualifications.

The more common and well-known funereal manuscripts, so termed from their being found in great numbers encased with the mummies, in nearly all the Egyptian tombs, contain specimens of writing in various stages of that transition (the fact of which Young so emphatically dwelt upon) from the hieroglyphic to the cursive or enchorial character. These, therefore, of course, presented an invaluable source of information, by which the relation of these different modes of writing might be established, and some steps at least secured towards their interpretation.

These papyri were manifestly of very different ages, their

* Life, p. 289.

dates extending probably through a long series of centuries: the comparison of their texts was thus a most interesting and important object. It afforded the means of comparing with each other the different modes of expressing the same ideas at least, if not the same words, in the various characters employed in these several stages of transmutation between the hieroglyphic and the later styles, of identifying equivalent groups or characters, whether the letter were used phonetically or not. The interpretation was, of course, in this case peculiarly assisted by the pictorial embellishments.

The discovery of another important set of papyri by Casati and Grey opened out new views as to the interpretation of the enchorial characters. Champollion and Young were engaged simultaneously in the prosecution of the researches connected with these points, and, in some instances, had opportunities of personal communication with each other. But Champollion enjoyed especial advantages from circumstances which placed some of these documents in his possession, and thus enabled him to take precedence in the publication of results; while his competitor, if he had enjoyed the same facilities, would, no doubt, have been equally competent to perceive the force of the new evidence thus adduced, and equally ready to make use of it, even if setting aside some of his earlier inferences and conjectures.

Dr. Peacock, in reflecting with just severity on Champollion, expresses his regret to find so eminent a writer as Chevalier Bunsen "supporting by the weight of his authority some of the grossest of these misrepresentations."* Some more particular remarks on M. Bunsen had been before given, p. 311, in support of this accusation.

Dr. Young displayed singular modesty and forbearance in his controversy with Champollion, treating him throughout with all the respect due to his acknowledged eminence; and while mildly reproaching him with omitting to give him the due credit for his own share in the research, yet in no way insinuating that any discreditable motive led to the omission.

In fact, Dr. Peacock thinks a far more stringent tone of criticism might have been fairly applied. He takes up the cause of Young with a less scrupulous zeal; and though with perfect good temper, yet with deeply damaging force of argument and statement of facts exposes the very unjustifiable nature of Champollion's pretensions, and vindicates the claims of Young to his fair and important share in these discoveries. Dr. Peacock† especially dwells on the tone of assumption in which Champollion presents himself to his readers as in exclusive possession of a province of which he had long since been the sole conqueror, and regards

* Life, p. 337. † Ibid. p. 334.

every question raised as to his exclusive rights as an unjustifiable attack, to be resented and repelled; while he studiously suppresses the *dates* of the successive stages of the discovery, and thus attacks Young on the assertions made on imperfect knowledge in the earlier stages of his investigations, with the aid of all his own accumulated information acquired subsequently; a proceeding the inequitable nature of which needs only stating to stand exposed.

As instances of this, Young, in 1816, on the strength of comparatively imperfect information then acquired, made some representations respecting the enchorial characters in the Rosetta inscription, and their relation to those employed in the funereal rolls. These Champollion criticises and exposes without reserve, from the more full knowledge he had obtained in 1824; entirely passing over Young's own *later* statement on the same subject correcting his former views, and from which Dr. Peacock considers that even Champollion himself probably derived a large portion of his own knowledge of the subject!

Dr. Peacock has collected in one point of view Champollion's main assertions, as representing the state of the case.* He has shown that some of the propositions dwelt upon, were in point of fact *never maintained* by Dr. Young, and that it was chiefly by his later researches that the erroneous impressions at first entertained, respecting the points to which they relate, had been corrected, and their true nature established.

In 1821 Champollion denied altogether the existence of an alphabetic element among the hieroglyphics; but in the following year he adopted the whole of Young's principles, and applied them, with one modification only. The analogy of certain marks in the Chinese hieroglyphics to signify proper names; the principle that the phonetic power of the symbol is derived from the initial letter or syllable of the name of the object which it represents, in the Egyptian language, are among the chief of those which he borrows without acknowledgment, or claims without regard to their prior announcement by Young: "It would be difficult," says Dr. Peacock, "to point out in the history of literature a more flagrant example of disingenuous suppression of the real facts bearing on an important discovery."

The *éloge* of Young by Arago depreciates his merits in regard to the hieroglyphical discoveries in a way which evinces that Arago's known high esteem and regard for him were in this instance superseded by the feeling of national pride, and that he viewed the question between him and Champollion as one between English and French science, in which Arago's strong partialities more naturally than justly enlisted him on the side of his own countryman, and led him to represent the state of the

* Life, p. 335.

case most favourably to those pretensions. Dr. Peacock has alluded but briefly to the views of Arago, and towards the conclusion of the chapter sums up the representation of the case as given in the *éloge*, remarking only, that the whole of his previous statements constitute the refutation of it. We will briefly present the main points of Arago's view, which is throughout distinguished by a tone of perfect courtesy towards Young, but which evinces a disposition to assign to him no more than the merit of the first crude conjectures on the subject, leaving it to others to follow out the idea by the necessary substantial proofs.

Arago contends that Young's principle of phonetic interpretation contained a mixture of truth and error: that it was essentially distinguished from that of Champollion in attributing to the hieroglyphical symbols the power of vocalising syllables, and even words, as well as letters: that he left it in a state in which it was not applicable to other names, or capable of determining the correctness of any proposed interpretation of the kind: he further denies that Young had acquired the knowledge of the existence of signs which were homophonous, or the fact that, in some instances, different symbols have the same phonetic force and meaning. All these are pointed out by Dr. Peacock as misrepresentations, upon the evidence adduced in the earlier parts of the chapter, to which it would be impossible, within our limits, to do full justice, since this could only be secured by going minutely into the several statements. On the whole, however, we could wish that something more distinct and condensed had been put forth in reply.

The account of all these researches is illustrated by copious extracts from the correspondence of Dr. Young. As with most men deeply immersed in the details of an intricate subject, his correspondence so wholly refers to minute points of investigation or controversy occupying his attention at the moment, and presuming upon his correspondent's *general* knowledge of the nature of the subject, that the reader not previously versed in the question can gain little insight into the main points of the inquiry;—in the multitude of details he is rather perplexed than enlightened, and is left amid an *embarras des richesses*, very much at a loss to educe out of the varied mass of rich and valuable details, any substantial and connected general conclusions.

In directing attention to Dr. Young's *optical* researches, it may be necessary just to glance at the progress of such inquiries previous to the date of his labours; and we may observe, that up to that period nothing like a connected view of the physical character of this wonderful agent had been attained. A few isolated speculations had indeed been put forth respecting a theory of emitted molecules on the one hand, and of waves in an ethereal

medium on the other, and a few experimental facts bearing on the choice between such hypotheses had been ascertained.

Newton had investigated the periodical alternations of colours in *thin films*, as in soap-bubbles, or the film of air between two glasses pressed together, which he ascribed to alternate dispositions or "fits" in the light to be reflected or not: Hooke had speculated on their being caused by pulsations or waves: Huyghens had investigated the *double refraction* in Iceland spar, and had framed a theory of waves to represent it: Newton opposed this by a theory of molecules with *poles*: Grimaldi had observed coloured *bands* or *fringes* (since called *diffraction*) both on the outside edge and within the shadows of bodies in a very narrow beam of light; and Newton accurately investigated the former kind, which he ascribed to a peculiar *inflexion* of the rays.

Such was briefly the state of physical optics at the time when Dr. Young first entered on the field. The several phenomena of common reflexion and refraction, of double refraction, of inflexion or diffraction, and of the coloured rings, did not seem to be connected by any *common* principle; nor, even separately considered, could it be said that they were very satisfactorily explained. It was now the peculiar distinction of Young to perceive, and to establish in the most incontestable manner, a great principle of the simplest kind, which at once rendered the wave-hypothesis applicable to the two last-named classes of facts, and thus directly connected them with the former: as it has since done for a multitude of other phenomena.

It is not always that we are enabled to trace the first rise and progress of the idea of a great discovery in the inventor's mind. Dr. Young, however, has left on record the progress of the first suggestions which occurred to him on the subject of interference. The first view which presented itself was that of the *analogies* furnished by *sound*, which, as is well known, is conveyed by means of waves propagated in air. And in the case of two sounds differing a very little from the same pitch, produced at the same time, we hear, not a continuous sound, but *beats*, that is, alternations of sound and silence; the waves in the one case conspiring with and reinforcing each other, in the other counteracting, neutralising, and destroying each other.

But, in more special reference to light, Dr. Young's account of the origin of his ideas is so clear and striking, that we must give it in his own words:

"It was in May 1801 that I discovered by reflecting on the beautiful experiments of Newton a law which appears to me to account for a greater variety of interesting phenomena than any other optical principle that has yet been made known. I shall endeavour to explain

this law by a comparison: Suppose a number of equal waves of water to move upon the surface of a stagnant lake, with a certain constant velocity, and to enter a narrow channel leading out of the lake; suppose, then, another similar cause to have excited another equal series of waves, which arrive at the same channel with the same velocity and at the same time with the first. Neither series of waves will destroy the other, but their effects will be combined: if they enter the channel in such a manner that the elevations of the one series coincide with those of the other, they must together produce a series of greater joint elevations; but if the elevations of one series are so situated as to correspond to the depressions of the other, they must exactly fill up those depressions, and the surface of the water must remain smooth: at least I can discover no alternative either from theory or from experiment. Now I maintain that similar effects take place whenever two portions of light are thus mixed; and this I call the general law of the interference of light."*

A slight reflection on such an analogy will suffice to generalise it, so as to convey a tolerably exact idea of the case of the *interference* of two rays of light. We have only to imagine in like manner two sets of waves propagated through an ethereal medium and coinciding in direction, when it will be easily apparent that, just as in the case of the supposed canal, they may have their waves either conspiring or counteracting, and consequently giving a point of brightness or darkness accordingly.

This would directly apply to the *thin films*. A ray impinging would be partly reflected at the first surface of the thin film, partly entering it would be reflected internally at its second surface, and emerge coinciding in *direction* with the first, but retarded behind it in its *undulations* either by a whole or a half-undulation, or some multiples of these; thus combining with the first, and giving either a point of brightness or one of darkness accordingly; or by some intermediate fraction, giving an intermediate shade. And this would go on alternately at successively greater thicknesses of the film, giving a succession of such points or bands.

If two rays or sets of waves, instead of being exactly superimposed, be supposed to *meet*, inclined at a very acute angle, in a somewhat similar way, they would, across the whole space which the united rays would occupy, alternately conspire, or clash, with each other, thus giving rise to a series of bright and dark points, the assemblage of which would produce bands or stripes on a screen intercepting the rays. Now, as to actual experimental cases, it was in the application of this latter theoretical idea that the invention of Dr. Young was peculiarly displayed. The former case was that alone which seems to have occurred to

* Works, vol. i. p. 202.

Hooke in reference to the colours of thin plates; and even this was in his mind but a very indefinite conception; nor did it seem at first sight readily comparable with such cases as the diffraction-fringes, or still less with the internal bands in a shadow observed by Grimaldi. Young, however, in following out his comprehensive theory to the case last supposed, conceived a community of principle applying to both these as well as to other classes of phenomena.

He repeated and extended Grimaldi's experiment; using narrow slips of card to intercept the ray, in which case dark and bright stripes parallel to the sides internally marked the whole shadow longitudinally, while the external fringes appeared on the outside at each edge.

In theory, originating at the small aperture, a series of waves was propagated onward, till, on reaching the card, they were broken up into two new sets of waves, and spread in circles round each edge as a new centre; while part of the original set continued to pass on at each side. On the principle just mentioned these would *interfere* with the new portions on the outside; and the two new portions would *interfere* with each other in the inside of the shadow; in either case giving stripes or bands. To complete the proof, —when an opaque screen was placed so as to intercept the rays on one side, though abundance of light was present on the other, yet all the internal bands immediately disappeared; demonstrating that the effect was due solely to the *concurrence* of the light from *both* sides.

Young's investigations in fact extended to a number of minor points; we have here merely indicated the leading and essential results: they were also long complicated by various considerations which it required time and experience to show were erroneous or superfluous. But on these we need not dwell.

When the public mind is generally ill-informed on any subject, it is not surprising that any one writer, especially if of some previous reputation, should be able to assert an absolute command over public opinion, whether in favour or in disparagement of a particular invention or a particular investigator of that subject. Such was the case with Dr. Young and his theory of light, which, in his own country, was neglected and disparaged to an extent explicable only from the apathy even of the scientific world, more especially when acted upon by the acrimonious and overbearing censures cast upon that theory, by a critic known to be conversant with the subject, and whose acknowledged powers as a writer gave immense influence to the bitter sarcasms and violent abuse and ridicule with which he assailed the discoveries of Dr. Young and the whole theory of waves. Those who have read the articles alluded to in the *Edinburgh Review* of that date,—well

known to have been the productions of Lord Brougham,—will not be at a loss to comprehend the crushing effect with which they must have acted on a discovery at the time new, unsupported, open to many confessed difficulties, and opposed to the prepossessions of a large portion even of the scientific world.

From the interruption of communication with the continent during the war, it happened that, many years after the date of Young's researches, M. Fresnel, entirely ignorant of what had been done in this country, followed up, independently, the very same investigations; and in a Memoir on Diffraction presented to the Academy of Sciences in 1815, detailed all the same, or similar experiments, leading to the establishment of the same explanation of the phenomena. Fresnel, however, pursued the subject to a greater extent, and carried out the mathematical development by a more elaborate analysis.

In the year 1816 Young's researches first became known to the French savans, on the occasion of a visit made by Arago and Gay-Lussac to England, when they sought the acquaintance of Dr. Young, already known to them by his general reputation, and found him at Worthing, whither he had gone for the summer, where a memorable conversation took place, the account of which we will give in Arago's words:

"In the year 1816 I visited England, accompanied by my scientific friend Gay-Lussac. Fresnel had then just entered on his career of science in the most brilliant manner by his Memoir on Diffraction. This work, which, in our opinion, contained a capital experiment irreconcilable with the Newtonian theory of light, became naturally the first subject of our conversation with Dr. Young. We were surprised at the numerous qualifications which he put upon our commendations of it; when at length he declared that the experiment which we thought so important was to be found published as long ago as 1807 in his lectures on Natural Philosophy. This assertion seemed to us questionable; and a long and minute discussion followed. Mrs. Young was present, but did not take any part in the conversation, as we thought from the fear of being supposed liable to the ridiculous sobriquet of *bas-bleu*, which makes English ladies reserved on such subjects in the presence of strangers. Our want of tact did not strike us until Mrs. Young abruptly quitted the room. We were beginning to apologise to her husband, when she returned with a large 4to volume under her arm. It was the first volume of the *Natural Philosophy*. She placed it on the table, opened the book, without saying a word, at p. 787,*

* We must here notice a trifling inaccuracy into which Dr. Peacock has fallen. The reference given in the above passage to Young's *Natural Philosophy* is stated by Arago correctly, p. 787, as we have copied it. Dr. Peacock has, by some inadvertence, made it p. 387, and thus finds a difficulty in reconciling the narrative with the book. At p. 787 will, however, be found a description referring to a diagram in the plates (fig. 445), which entirely agrees with the description. (Young, p. 389.)

and pointed to a diagram where the curvilinear course of the diffracted bands, which was the subject of the discussion, is theoretically established."*

In a word, the claims of Young were at once recognised by Arago; and by none more freely than by Fresnel himself; and between these two eminent fellow-labourers a correspondence and even intimacy was soon established. They constantly communicated their ideas as new points of investigation pressed on their notice, and each contributed, in some instances, to clear up the difficulties which presented themselves to the other. Yet the announcement of Fresnel's researches excited violent hostility among a considerable section of the savans of the Institute, consisting of devoted adherents to Laplace, who continued to uphold the theory of emission; and this great mathematician in particular used his utmost influence to discourage and suppress the new doctrine.

The fate of the undulatory theory on its first announcement was thus remarkably and similarly unfortunate, from different causes, in England and in France; and considering the very abstract nature of the subject, and how apparently remote it is from any thing which could be supposed to involve the interests or passions of men, it is not less singular to observe the bitterness and acrimony of the hostility which it had to encounter. The British reviewer and the French academician seemed to vie with each other in malignity; and the two great discoverers, Young and Fresnel, were both for a long time destined to the mortification of neglect and discouragement. The only cheering feature was certainly in favour of British science; the several papers of Young, successively communicated to the Royal Society, having been not only printed in its *Transactions*, but also in two instances selected as the Bakerian lectures; a compliment which the council has the power of bestowing annually, from a small bequest, on one of the papers communicated to the Society.

In 1809 Young published an elaborate refutation of Laplace's memoir on double refraction; showing that its laws could be much more satisfactorily explained on the wave system. This may be regarded as the most signal blow directed against the lingering credit of the molecular theory. It stood its ground among the French academicians longer than elsewhere, from the predominant influence of Laplace, who, with an obstinacy which formed part of his character, continued to the last to cling to the doctrine he had so long upheld, in the face of all the new facts and reasonings which were now enlightening the world of science.

It has been well observed, that "simplicity is not always a

* Arago's Biog. Notice of Young, Œuvres, tom. i. p. 292.

fruit of the first growth;" and accordingly some of the earliest of Young's researches were complicated by unnecessary conditions afterwards easily removed, but which in some instances continued long to embarrass the subject and furnish sources of objection to the wave hypothesis.

One such difficulty for a long time pressed upon the completeness of theory in regard to the explanation of the *thin plates*. According to the law of the thickness, it followed that at the point of actual contact at the centre the rays would be in accordance, and the centre ought to be a point of *brightness*; it is however, in fact, *always black* when the extreme limit is reached. Hence Dr. Young, and those who followed him for a long time afterwards, supposed that in this, as well as in some other cases which seemed analogous, we must suppose *half an undulation* to be by some means *gained* by one ray or *lost* by the other; and this seemed an *arbitrary* or empirical assumption, which the *theory* did not account for. We shall presently see how the difficulty was obviated.

Other cases involving the principle of interference were also investigated by Dr. Young; which are not without a practical bearing. Every one may have remarked the threads of a spider's web occasionally exhibiting brilliant colours in the sunshine. The same thing is seen in fine scratches on the surface of polished metal, and may be artificially produced in several ways. These colours Dr. Young showed were due to *interference* of the portions of light reflected from the sides of the groove, or narrow transparent thread. His attention was also particularly directed to the more complex tints produced when light was transmitted through a texture of fine threads, such as gauze, or even loose fibres of wool, cotton, silk, &c. Here a similar theoretical explanation was found to apply; and when the fibres were tolerably uniformly spread, a bright point of light seen through them appeared surrounded by a halo of coloured rings. The diameters of these rings varied with the *fineness* of the *fibres*; and were theoretically shown to depend on the interference of the portions of light passing through the transparent fibres and the interstices. He was able to show by theory the relation between the *diameters* of the *rings* and the *thickness* of the *fibres*; but the former could be easily measured by an appropriate apparatus of a very simple construction. Hence the diameters of those minute fibres could be immediately determined, and thus differences among them rendered appreciable which were quite imperceptible to the eye. He proposed this practical consideration as likely to be of importance to those interested in estimating the fineness of wool, cotton, &c. for commercial purposes. It does not appear, so far as we know, whether such a method has ever been found prac-

tically available. But we should imagine it could not be undeserving of attention; and in the hands of a person of moderate skill would certainly confer new powers of discrimination in such cases.

The undulatory doctrine, however, was long embarrassed by several objections which it required more extended consideration to remove. Thus, it had long since been remarked by Newton that waves spread round an obstacle, and on the same principle the *rectilinear* propagation of light is a difficulty; light ought to bend round the edges of any intercepting body. But the very principle suggested by Huyghens afforded in some sense an answer; and a fuller examination of the nature and mode of propagation of the waves showed that the oblique and diverging portions will in general interfere with and neutralise each other, so that the main effect will be confined to that part which is in the direct line of the proportion. Young* dwelt much at first on this objection; and afterwards, in a letter to Arago, he renews a similar expression of the difficulties he felt in another point of view: "If light has so great a tendency to diverge into the path of neighbouring rays, and to interfere with them, as Huyghens supposes, I do not see how it escapes being totally extinguished in a very short space, even in the most transparent medium." But the principle just adverted to shows that the middle portion of the light coming from a point of any physical magnitude is not subject to these mutual interferences, and does not diverge, but is perpetually reinforced by the supply of fresh waves incessantly propagated from the original source. In these explanations Young at length expressed his full concurrence in a letter to Fresnel.

The capital discovery of the *polarisation of light by reflection* made by Malus in 1810 formed a remarkable epoch in the history of optical research. The same idea of *sides* or *poles* imagined by Newton seemed to be involved. The reflected ray acquired the same character and properties as each of the rays in the doubly refracting crystal, though their *planes* of *polarisation* are at right angles to each other, and in determinate directions with respect to the crystal. A ray polarised in one plane will neither be transmitted through the crystal nor reflected from glass, when the planes in which they are respectively presented to it are at right angles to its own plane of polarisation. A ray may also be polarised by other methods: by transmission through a number of parallel plates of glass, or through a plate of *tourmaline*, or certain other substances. Hence any of these methods may be used convertibly to test the polarisation of a ray, and the plates or crystals employed are then termed *analysers*.

A particular angle of incidence is necessary to give the maxi-

* Life, p. 140.

mum effect; different for each reflecting substance; and this subject to a law whose subsequent disclosure constituted one of the most beautiful discoveries of Sir D. Brewster, viz. that it takes place at that incidence at which *the refracted ray is perpendicular to the reflected;* or, which is mathematically the same thing otherwise expressed, when the *tangent of the angle of incidence is the index of refraction of the substance.*

Such were some of the leading points successively disclosed; and they soon engaged the attention of Young, as well as Fresnel, who afterwards so largely contributed to the development and extension of them in connection with the doctrine of undulations, of which they were destined to form one of the strongest supports. Yet so little was the value and tendency of Malus' discovery at first perceived, that it was regarded as quite at variance with the wave theory. Young himself went so far as to predict that it was a problem which "would probably long remain to mortify the vanity of an ambitious philosophy, completely unresolved by any theory." Again, in a review of Malus' paper (in 1811), he considers it "conclusive with respect to the *insufficiency* of the undulatory theory in its present state for explaining all the phenomena of light." And, again, in a letter to Sir D. Brewster, five years later, he expresses himself thus: "With respect to my fundamental hypotheses respecting the nature of light (*i. e.* the wave theory), I become less and less fond of dwelling on them, as I learn more and more facts like those which M. Malus discovered; because *though they may not be incompatible with those facts, they certainly give no assistance in explaining them.*" Even Malus himself was at first of opinion that the phenomena of polarisation were equally irreconcilable with both the undulatory and molecular theories; an opinion which he distinctly expressed in a letter to Young.*

Somewhat later, however, we find Young beginning to entertain a more satisfactory view of the case, as appears by the following passage from a letter addressed by him to Arago in 1817:

"I have been reflecting upon the *possibility* of giving an *imperfect* explanation of the affection of light, which constitutes polarisation, without departing from the genuine doctrine of undulations. It is a principle of this theory that all undulations are simply propagated through homogeneous mediums in concentric spherical surfaces, like the undulations of sound, consisting simply of the direct and retrograde motions of their particles in the direction of the radius, with their concomitant condensations and rarefactions. And yet it is possible to explain in this theory *a transverse vibration*, propagated also in the direction of the radius, and with equal velocity, the motions of

* Works, vol. i. p. 248, note.

the particles bearing a certain constant direction with respect to that radius; and this is polarisation."

The conception of *transverse vibrations*, now that the idea has become familiarised, seems to present little difficulty; yet it was at first opposed to the prepossessions even of the most zealous undulationists. Fresnel long hesitated fully to adopt the idea, although admitting it to be the only mode of representing polarisation,—on the ground of being unable to reconcile it with mechanical principles; and this more precisely as to the notion of *transverse* vibrations *alone* being produced, which constituted this theory in all its simplicity; whereas Young had (as we have just seen) believed both these and *longitudinal* vibrations to co-exist. To establish *this* point, he expressly says, was the main difficulty which embarrassed him.*

This idea of vibrations performed in directions at right angles to the line of the ray received at length its decisive proof from the phenomena of the coloured tints developed in polarised light by the interposition of plates of crystals (such as those of mica, selenite, &c.), when examined by an analyser.

Young ascribed these colours generally to *interference;* but both Fresnel and Arago pointed out that this explanation was incomplete. Why did it only take place in *polarised* light, and even then not until the analyser had been applied?

These questions could not be answered until another important law had been established by the joint researches of Fresnel and Arago; and this consisted in the experimental conclusion, that when two rays are, in other respects, in a condition to interfere, but are polarised in planes *at right angles* to each other, they *cannot interfere:* they *can only* do so when polarised in *parallel* planes. Now this result, of necessity, implies that in rays polarised in different planes the vibrations must be executed in different planes; and this involves the admission that the vibrations must be *transverse to the ray.*

This principle was at length seen to complete the explanation so long sought of the polarised tints. The light originally polarised in one plane was, in traversing the doubly refracting crystal, divided into two portions in planes at right angles, which, as Young had shown in regard to position, were in a condition to interfere; (the *ordinary* ray of one such pair coinciding in direction with the extraordinary of some other pair:) were it not that being polarised in these rectangular planes, they could not interfere. It only required, then, the action of the *analyser* to resolve *each* portion into two, suppressing those in one plane, and transmitting those in the other, which, having their vibrations now parallel,

* Ann. de Chimie, 1831, tom. xvii. p. 184.

were thus enabled to manifest their interference, and produce the polarised tints, which in homogeneous light are simply alternations of light and darkness.

Such was the beautiful train of reasoning followed out by Arago and Fresnel to explain those polarised colours, originally and independently discovered by Arago and by Sir D. Brewster, and which, when the crystal is cut perpendicular to its axis, are seen in the form of rings round that axis; and of which the varieties in different crystals are now become familiar by means of the little instrument called the *polariscope*. But the principle of transverse vibrations thus established was the fruitful source of numerous other conclusions.

We have dwelt on the principle involved chiefly as bearing on the difficulties already spoken of, as experienced by Young and Fresnel in the explanation of phenomena with which these last would at first sight not appear to have any connection, but which were now shown to have a direct relation to them. According to the principle of transverse vibrations, as investigated by Fresnel, a number of comprehensive formulas resulted, including the deduction of Brewster's law of the polarising angle, as well as other important consequences.

One of these is the simple consideration, that in reflection, an oblique vibration is resolved into two at right angles, and thus a *change of plane*, or of *angular phase*, takes place. This is equivalent to a *retardation or acceleration in route* by a corresponding portion of a wave length; and if in any case the plane were turned through 180°, the ray would be in an opposite phase, or the change would be equivalent to a difference of one half an undulation. Obvious as now seems the conception, that a change of plane or angular phase is equivalent to retardation or acceleration in length of route, it does not appear to have been distinctly apprehended in the first instance either by Young or Fresnel, or it would have obviated some difficulties which long perplexed them; especially in the remarkable instance before mentioned of the colours of thin plates, the central black spot, and the supposed *arbitrary assumption* of the loss or gain of the half-undulation necessary to explain it.

Although Young, in the very same paper containing his theory of interference, pointed to a mechanical analogy which involved nearly the principle of its explanation, he did not perceive the application of it. Indeed, it can hardly be said to have been very clearly or happily expounded by any of the elementary writers who have systematised the theory, not excepting the author of the biography before us. It is thus less surprising that it should have long continued to furnish a ground of difficulty and objection. Yet in Fresnel's formula a mere change of algebraical *sign*, in the

sine of an angle, in the expression for the reflections at the first and at the second surface, gives a difference of 180° in phase, which is thus accounted for without any subsidiary assumption whatever.

We have thus far endeavoured briefly to sketch the leading points in the history of the first establishment of those grand principles of the theory of light, which Young has the undivided and unquestioned honour of having been the first to propose and to demonstrate. Every subsequent improvement and enlargement of the theory, which has regularly kept pace with the advance of experimental discovery, has, as it were, grown out of the simple principles at first laid down by a natural sequence, without any new hypotheses or forced and arbitrary changes. It is a theory of which an eminent philosopher, by no means unduly biased in its favour, and at a time when it had not reached its present point of perfection, emphatically said, "It is a series of felicities; and if not true, eminently deserves to be true." And the increasing proof which it continues to receive by its readiness in meeting nearly every new experimental case as it arises, augments in the same proportion our conviction that it will, sooner or later, be equally successful in the solution of those few phenomena which still appear to stand out as exceptional instances to its application.

Art. IV.—ATHEISM.

The First Cause; or, a Treatise upon the Being and Attributes of God. By Rev. J. C. Whish, M.A. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday. 1855.

The Burnett Prize-Essays.

Principles of Psychology. By Herbert Spencer. Longmans. 1855.

George Jacob Holyoake and Modern Atheism. An Essay. By S. D. Collet. Trübner. 1855.

The Reasoner for 1855. Edited by G. J. Holyoake. Holyoake, Fleet Street.

If ever the dark shadow of Atheism were suddenly to envelop the earth, would the crash of falling churches, the disbanding of ecclesiastical classes, and the vanishing of all conscious individual intercourse with God, be necessarily accompanied by the yielding of all moral ties and the dissolution of every sacred social organisation? Before we can attempt to answer such a question, we must call to mind a very obvious but a strangely-forgotten truth, that

human trust does not create God, and that human distrust would not annihilate Him. There is a thoroughly atheistic way of shuddering over Atheism, which is apt to express itself as if the spread of human disbelief would not only overcloud but *empty* Heaven. Although the darkness which we have supposed would hide God from us, it would not hide us from God; nor should we ever be beyond the reach of His moral influence. When people assume that an atheist *must* "live without God in the world," they assume what is fatal to their own Theism. We deeply believe that by far the greater part of all human trust does not arise, as is commonly supposed, from our seeking God, but from God's seeking us; and this, too, without *any* clear admission or confession on our part of His influence upon us;—that a great deal of it is trust in *goodness* rather than in any personal God, and might *possibly* be held along with intellectual disbelief of His personal existence; in short, that if you could blot out on the one hand all acts of *self-confessed* trust in God,—if you could blot out all private and public *worship*, properly so called, spurious or genuine, all churches, all creeds, all pharisaism, and all pure conscious devotion; and if, on the other hand, you might leave all this, and blot out of the earth all unconscious and unconfessed acts of surrender to the divine influence in the heart,—all that *might* possibly be connected with purely intellectual Atheism,—you would blot out more of true "religion," more of that which "binds together" human society, more of God's true agency on the earth, in the latter case than in the former. Of course we do not mean that the truest unconscious trust in God's influence is not generally to be found in the same minds which, *at other times*, also consciously confess Him; but only this, that if in every life, whether of faith or doubt, you numbered up the acts of trust which are not rendered to God *personally*, but to the instincts and impulses which so often represent Him in the heart, and which might continue to represent Him even when the dark cloud of conscious doubt of His existence had intervened, you would probably have numbered far more acts which really originate in divine influence than could possibly be found animated by a real conscious personal belief.

And if this be so, as we believe most men will admit as much from self-knowledge as from knowledge of the world, it is a fatal blunder to attempt to prove to the atheist that, in consequence of his doubt, he has been and is living totally without God; that his eyes need opening, not in order that they may recognise One who has been ever with him, but that they may help him to find a distant and alienated power. There is no teaching more mischievous in its effects than that which makes human belief in God

the *first* regenerating power in human society, and God Himself the second; which makes God's blessing a consequence of man's confession, and which therefore limits that blessing to the narrow bounds of the confession. In fact, this delusion tends to depress rather than to exaggerate ordinary men's real estimate of the value of faith. Hearing it constantly implied that God influences men's hearts only so far as they *confess* His influence, that He will do nothing for them, morally and spiritually, unless they render the "glory" where it is due; and yet, seeing that *in fact* this *sine quâ non* of divine influence is any thing but a true mark of actual goodness, being often only the crowning element in evil,—a school of thought has sprung up which depreciates the value of faith altogether, which delights in discovering that the greatest good is, after all, to be found hidden under a mask of scepticism and self-mockery, in short, a school which replaces the religious ascription of all goodness to God's grace by light ridicule of a human nature that does not pretend to be so assisted, but rather does the best it can for itself in an unostentatious way. This disposition to compare keen self-mockery with formal belief, and to give the preference to the former, is perceptible enough in the whole tone of our literature. Thackeray's writings are throughout tinged with the feeling that thorough self-distrust is one of the highest moral virtues of which men in general are capable. And until even this honest self-exposure, and every other sort of goodness, so far as it is goodness, be shown to be attributable to God's Spirit working in man, far though it be removed from the theological virtue of faith, faith itself will never recover from the discredit into which its undue isolation has brought it. As soon as God is confessed to be far greater than our faith, we shall begin to make the effort to render our faith more worthy of God: but while men own so many things to be noble which are never claimed as divine because they are unaccompanied by this conscious faith, so long they will care little what that faith does or does not include. Men have found the faith-classification of human actions so narrow and unjust, they have seen so much goodness without faith, and so much faith without goodness, that they begin to preach justification by *sincerity* as a more human, if it is not a more divine formula than justification by faith.

In showing, then, that Atheism is false to human nature, that trust in God is the natural atmosphere of our moral life, we must not take for granted, as is so often done, that belief in God as God, and belief in goodness, are one and the same thing. We must grant the atheist his unexplained impulses to good, the *implicit* God of his conscience, and show how he mutilates and dwarfs human nature by denying it all explained impulses

to good, the explicit God of faith. Though guarding against the error that an *acknowledgment* of God must accompany all virtual obedience to His word, it is of course manifest that, so far as human action is self-conscious as well as voluntary, blindness to God's existence must entail a large and constant loss upon the blind. Although other and deeper springs of divine influence be not closed, although there may be yet (except in the cases in which intellectual atheism is the dullness produced by moral atheism) far more effectual means of inward guidance still accessible to God's providence than those which any deadness of insight can obstruct,—yet all the tone of the reflective life must be greatly changed by the exclusion of this great object from the field of the inward vision. Not to see what exists must of course modify constantly the whole range of action and thought which has a real (though in this case unperceived) reference to that existence. As our ancestors, who did not know that air had weight, reaped unconsciously *most* of the benefits of the all-permeating atmospheric pressure, but of course lost that which depended on the actual recognition and conscious use of its weight, so those who do not know that God is, while they experience, as much as any, most of the blessing of His existence and His character, *cannot* have the blessing which arises only from a knowledge and conscious account of the fact of that existence and character; and therefore it is, we believe, that, in proportion as mental culture increases the horizon of man's experience, and reduces more and more of his life beneath the eye of his thought, is the moral loss serious and deep which arises from this mental blindness. Those who have but little inward life, whose busy routine of occupation, or natural one-sidedness of character, leaves room only for a narrow moral horizon, suffer indeed and bitterly from blindness to the only great and tranquillising reality of life, but not at all in the same proportion as those whose whole nature is awake and sensitive to human emotions, without including the belief in God. Of all merely intellectual atheisms, hard material atheisms betray *least* strikingly and painfully the absence of the power of faith. There are so many *natural* obstructions in such minds to the propagation of religious conviction throughout the whole nature, that its absence is not striking; there would be so many clouds as to hide the sun even if it were up. But thoroughly cultivated and refined atheisms are always intensely startling and painful, like the blotting of the sun out of a clear sky. The actual loss is greater; proportionally far more of God's influence would *naturally* come through conscious channels with the cultivated than with the uncultivated man; proportionally less strength and warmth can be received unconsciously from "behind the veil."

Let us first of all look steadily at the startling fact which meets us on the threshold of this question—the fact, namely, that it is so much as *possible* for a sincere truth-loving mind to doubt of God's existence—that the greatest of all realities appears so frequently, in the history of nations as well as in individual life, rather in the shape of a whispered haunting suggestion than as an unveiled illumined truth. Can any answer be found to the argument: "You tell us that this faith is the *one* pure spring of all the *conscious* purity and strength to which human nature has access. Why, then, is it at best a faith, and not a conspicuous fact? Why can it *ever*, even for a time, be inaccessible to eager search? And why, when attained, does it still linger in the background of your mind, as it were, being usually, even to yourselves, more audible than heard?" The common and dreary answer is, of course, the mists of human corruption. But it seems strange that the very remedy which is to heal the blindness should be applicable only when the blindness is already healed. We deeply believe, too, that this question is not explicable by the doctrine of Dr. Newman and others that trust is made a kind of probationary venture of the will—a courageous *risk* of ourselves by a dim twilight—in order to test whether we would not rather serve even a *probable* God than a *certain* self-love. We do not deny that we ought to do so, if it were possible for Him thus to experimentalise upon us; but it seems to us that it is a most unworthy representation of the divine character to represent Him as tempting us by self-concealment. Probably the account which most true men would give to themselves of the mystery is this: that while faith fosters, sight must arrest, the growth of a moral nature constituted like ours,—nay, that there may even be peculiar stages of individual and social life when the absence of faith alleviates instead of aggravating the pressure of moral evil. We believe that a constant *vision* of God would be an injury to almost all men,—that there are periods when even utter scepticism is the sign of God's mercy, and the necessary condition of moral restoration. We believe a real *independent* moral growth would be impossible to natures that had not been shaded, as it were, by a special veil from the overwhelming brightness of a divine character ever present with us. Either every thing human must have been changed, so as to make us impervious to personal influences, or there must be a special film to screen from our sensitive passive nature, at least during the growth of our character, the intense impressions emanating from any spiritual beings greatly superior to ourselves. Every one knows that, even amongst men, a powerful massive character, though it be nearly perfect, often positively *injures* those within the circle of its influence. They lose the

spring of their mind beneath the overwhelming weight of its constant pressure. They are crushed into an unconscious mechanical consonance with all its ways. Nay, even affection, not pressure, may do the same thing. Moral preference, moral freedom, moral character, may be superseded altogether by the single unanalysed predominance of another's *wish*. This it was probably which rendered the removal of Christ the first condition of the moral life of the apostles. "It is expedient for you that I go away." In the case supposed we should lose the power of growing up to be "fellow-workers" with God from mere unmoral captivity to His infinite influence. Faith means the discernment of His character without subjugation of the small finite personality to the infinite life. To exchange faith for sight on earth, would be to exchange Theism for Pantheism—moral education for moral absorption. Again, we think it true, for an inverse reason, that there are stages in human culture when even utter scepticism may be a divine remedy for moral evil. When civilisation has become corrupt, and men are living consciously below their faith, we believe that it is in mercy that God strikes the nations with blindness,—that the only hope of remedy lies in thus taking away an influence they resist, and leaving them to learn the stern lesson of helpless self-dependence. The shock of a lost faith often restores sooner than the reproach of a neglected faith. Nay, often before any real faith can be attained at all, scepticism may be, we believe, a discipline of mind and heart, given not in retribution but in love. The painful groping of an uncertain footing amidst immortal wants and affections is often the only means by which, as far as we can see, we could have our eyes opened at once to their infinite truth and to our own responsibility.

It is in *growing* characters, maturing in the culture of all the finer elements, as well as in mere intellect, that scepticism seems most evil in its influences—characters needing the genial influence of trust, and yet held fast in some of the many intellectual traps of human speculation. In other cases it cannot be regarded as unmixed evil. But, as we have said, in refined and cultured minds there is, we believe, no influence that can secure constant progress apart from personal trust; and long-continued doubt, whether arising from personal unfaithfulness or from evil influence, must in the end ossify the higher parts of the mind and distort the whole.

What, then, is the atheistic type of character? In other words, what is the type of character which a fully realised disbelief in the existence and influence over us of any spiritual nature higher than our own (however faithfully our own may be accepted and trusted) *tends* to produce? Vividly to see the im-

Atheism (or disbelief in ultimate moral distinctions), is the first step towards its disproof.

It is clear that Atheism necessarily tends relatively to reduce the influence and independence of the higher intellectual and moral faculties (even where the real existence of these is not disputed), as compared with that of the senses, social impulses, and those energies which tell upon the world. And this it does both involuntarily and unconsciously, by eradicating from the imagination that haunting image of the divine character which most stimulates these faculties into action, and also voluntarily and consciously, because the atheist must in consistency believe that the theist's worship gives them an unfair prominence. Holding that the human mind is in *direct* contact with no other mind, but is the latest and highest consummation of forces pushing upwards from a lower stage of existence, the atheist cannot regard his own highest mental states—conscience, affection, and so forth—as having any independent illumination of their own,—as skylights opened to let in upon human nature an infinite dawn from above, —but rather as a polished arch or dome completing and reflecting the whole edifice beneath. To him the highest point of *human* culture is the absolutely highest point in the mental universe; mere non-existence roofs us in beyond; and of course, therefore, the highest faculties we possess must derive their sole validity and their sole meaning from the lower nature to which they add the finishing touch. No doubt he will admit that new power and insight is gained, the higher self-culture is pushed; but the new power is not power from beyond human nature, the new insight is not insight into a region above it; it is only the stronger grasp of a more practised hand, the keener vision of a more comprehensive survey. Hence, by dismissing the faith in God, Atheism necessarily props up the higher faculties of man completely and solely on the lower organisation, and denies them any independent spring. Moreover, the atheist is led to justify and fortify himself in this natural result of his modes of thought by assuming, as Feuerbach does, that the object of man's worship, if there be any, ought to be a perfect *man*, and that the theist's God is not even strictly a magnified shadow of humanity, but only of a special and arbitrarily selected *portion* of humanity. This kind of worship, therefore, gives, he maintains, a factitious and disproportionate influence to certain so-called "higher parts" of human nature. An injurious and morbid reduplication is given, he thinks, to the faculties called moral and spiritual by this rapt attention to a fanciful religious echo of them, while the physical organisation and common-sense understanding are left to assert themselves. And so the atheist, denying any special or original sources of life for the highest part of man's

nature, sets it to take lessons from the lower, and look down instead of looking up. Hence, we believe, Atheism is far more uncomfortably and *consciously* alive to the material conditions under which it works, and the physiological laws it so anxiously consults, than would be the case if man had no moral nature at all. There is the same kind of *soreness* in the alliance between it and the physical nature, under this levelling theory, that there usually is between essentially different ranks, where the higher is induced by some theoretic conviction to disavow its special birthright.

Again, atheistic theory in one still more important respect diminishes the influence that must be given to the moral nature of man. It necessarily regards good and evil as ideas attained and attainable only by human capacity,—as depending on natural genius and insight only,—as wholly limited by natural disposition. Hence not seeing in them any movement of a living character towards us, but only an exercise of human capacity,—cases of moral difficulty are apt to be given up or slurred over as insoluble, which the theist feels *must* be and are capable of solution, if he can only trustfully follow, step by step, and without impatience, the gradual indications of God's purposes. There is all the difference in the world between the view of right and wrong which treats it as a mathematical problem which a man can solve or not, according to his capacity, and the view of it as something which depends on the faithfulness of a personal relation—something *certain* to become clearer and clearer, not through our capacity, but through the free illuminating power of another's influence, if we use the dim light we have in *beginning* to go where it leads. Right and wrong are usually considered as extremely simple to see—difficult only to do. This is very false, however, especially when weakness and sin have already complicated human relations. And at this point the atheistic and theistic views of conduct necessarily become essentially different in the relative importance they assign to moral instincts. Neither atheist nor theist can see any thing but thick darkness, perhaps, and both are utterly incompetent to find their own way to the light. But the atheist has only his own powers to trust; and, finding them shackled and paralysed by a thousand chains, can only despair, and find no help in the flickering conscience, which only seems to mock the gloom. The theist, if he can still believe in the infinite love of God, can trust implicitly that every step into the darkness will be into a darkness less complete, and show the way to the step beyond. Hence he can never believe but that right is *attainable*, if he will follow on; that the little insight he has must be implicitly obeyed, and not thrown away because it seems utterly inadequate to his need. If you don't

believe that "good" is *living and free*—that it is a *person*—you cannot believe that it will find *you* out; and you may be truly as incompetent to find *it* out as to leave the earth for the sun.

And just in the same way as the absence of trust tends to nourish a despondency in deep moral difficulty, and a neglect of the inadequate faculty we *have*, in the case of the individual,—so it is also fatal to the healthy progress of nations. The atheist says, "Even you admit that God only helps those who help themselves. Well, we help ourselves, and therefore God, if He exists, helps us; if He does not, we have all the help we can. *Science* is the true providence of man. We lay no faith on 'personal god;' we use our own faculties." Very well; but let men only realise your negative creed, and you will find they have not the heart, or perhaps the temerity, on great occasions, to help themselves any longer. *Trust* is the postulate of the capacity to help ourselves in any great or noble work. It becomes *impossible* to do our part bravely without this perfect reliance in the co-operation of God. What is to justify trust in a mere sudden gleam of light,—a streak just flashing over a universe at midnight,—except the conviction that it comes from One who will send more and more, as the occasion demands, if that be followed? Luther's intense saying, "We tell our Lord God plainly, that if He will have His church, He must look after it Himself. We cannot sustain it; and if we could, we should become the proudest asses under heaven," is the inspiration of *all* great action. No man dares to follow a gleam of conviction which tends to overturn a world, unless he is sure that he is but the interpreter of a Power who gave him that conviction, and can guard it after His interpreter is gone. Luther took no responsibility in the case, except the responsibility of his own individual life. How could he have done what he did with a sense of the uncertain fate of Europe, when the Roman Church should be gone, resting on his individual conscience? A small anxiety oppresses a man, if it be only his own uncertain judgment that he trusts. Paul was insupportably anxious about the measures he took to defend himself from Corinthian ill-will. Luther was depressed into a state of chronic melancholy by the difficulties of marriage-questions referred to his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Yet Paul snapped the chain which bound Christianity to the formal Judaism with the serenest equanimity; and Luther was never so calm and loftily certain as in the act which rent Christendom and cut history in two. If there is no one else who has looked into the future for you, and distinctly told you how to act, then you are bound to look into the future yourself, and take the awful possibilities you initiate upon

your own shoulders. Who could do this, on great or small occasions, without a paralysing dread? Atheism tends to make men and nations anxious, timid, hesitating, disinclined to place any ample confidence even in such moral insight as they have.

And further, Atheism shakes the authority of the moral faculties of man, by doing away with all adequate means of *expressing* the infinite distinction between right and wrong. Neither admitting that right action opens human eyes to a vision of Infinite Holiness, nor that it survives for ever in the immortal life it assists to build up,—Atheism has no language by which it can express the infinite nature of moral distinctions. Right and wrong, like all other qualities of human life, can only be expressed in finite terms,—can only be symbolised by objects which are immediately swept away by the drift of time,—which are mere invisible points in the infinite universe of space. The atheist has no infinite calculus applicable to human actions. He may say, indeed, that considerations of right and wrong differ from all others in their imperativeness, but he cannot believe that any infinite result in any way attends moral choice more than any other act of finite life. Why should the aged be so anxious about the regulation of their hearts, for example? It may be absolutely right; but how should we single out a *right* action as totally distinct from all others of certainly trivial and temporary nature? It affects no external life; it will almost immediately cease to affect any internal life. As is one act, so is another. All alike are temporary—all alike limited. Immortality—the communion with God—these are the only living expressions which the struggling nature of man, intensely conscious of the infinite character of duty and sin, can give to that infinitude. It is not, as is falsely said, that right and wrong take their distinctions from measures of duration, or from the arbitrary word of God; but that faith in infinite personal life, and in communion with, or separation from Infinite Good, is the only articulate utterance which our conscience can find for its sense of the absolutely *boundless* significance it sees in every moral choice. A rejection of these realities must react on the conscience itself, and force it to resign its "absolute and infinite" distinctions.

Again, a fully realised Atheism will undermine the worth of personal human affections; not merely indirectly, by losing sight of immortality, but still more directly by cutting off the chief spring of their spiritual life. If that fine wide-spreading network—hidden from all human eyes—the winding, crossing, blending, diverging threads of human affection which hold together human society, be indeed conceived as issuing every where out of everlasting night,—as spun, snapped asunder, and again repaired by the mere automatic operation of Nature's unconscious and

impersonal energy,—the personal affections lose quite the richest and most permanent of the *conscious* influences at least which minister to their life and growth. If we cease to believe in the infinite spiritual *presence* mediating between mind and mind, and try to expel that conception from our thoughts, we must become more and more completely dependent for the growth of the higher human ties on the conditions of physical intercourse. The awkward and constrained intercourse of human beings, so rarely interchanging the real secrets of the heart, and often most frigid when covering the intensest life, is not adequate to sustain the growth of deep affections. It supplies the *occasions*, not the sources of that growth. If there be no Eternal Depository of our resolves and fears, and hopes and trusts, there is little new moral strength consciously poured into these higher human relations at all. He who supposes that his nature can never be directly addressed from the spiritual side at all—that it remains rooted in unconscious energies—may indeed *indulge* passive emotion, when it arises spontaneously within him,—nay, may entertain and welcome it; but he cannot regard affection as claiming constant *service* from him, even where it has no external duty,—as a *trust* which he is bound to reverence; he cannot feel it matter of self-reproach if he grow cold; it is to him no withdrawal of a voluntary gift; it cannot be regarded as a personal and moral matter at all; it is the ceasing of that which he did not cause; it is the subsiding of a strange wave of feeling; he has no passionate dream that God is taking away that which was not treasured,—and that, even now, higher self-sacrifice, truer devotion, would bring back the receding tide. It *was* no trust, no trial; its loss therefore *is* no sign of censure or of failure. It is gone back out of the heart whence it came; and that is but a fiction which would make it appear a result of moral conduct on our part,—an expression of the character of a vigilant God. The atheistic theory thus tends to reduce the life of human affection to a close dependence on the *visible* moral relations between man and man. It leaves some sense of responsibility towards the living and present object of affection, but it cancels all idea of moral responsibility to the Inspirer of affection. It would tend to make us measure the self-sacrifice *due* from us by the self-sacrifice *deserved* by others, instead of measuring it by the eternal purposes and the immeasurable love of God. It destroys in this way the fulcrum on which human affection is sustained; for while we may *feel* the claim of another upon us, yet to hear it selfishly advanced is utterly destructive of its power; —only the great Mediator between the severed minds of men can revive the fading sense of duty, and melt the mind into bitter memory, without further estranging the rebellious heart; and if

no such Mediator be recognised, all *conscious* seeking of His influence or submission to His promptings is of course impossible. All the promises, the prayers, the self-reproaches, the resolves which *assume* a providential origin and voluntary divine influence for our spirits, are rendered impossible, and Atheism thus itself clips the life of human affection down to the *mortal* type which atheistic theory assigns to it. Of course theists are in this respect often practical atheists, and atheists may unconsciously treat as a moral trust and result of providential government that which their theory should represent as an involuntary, inevitable event. But just so far as the conscious life influences us at all, just so far theoretic Atheism dries up the sources of personal affection, by sweeping away that searching moral relation to the Inspirer of affection in which, even far more than in its relation to human objects, its safety and strength consist. The best and purest part of conscious self-sacrifice and devotion is not that which passes directly between men, but that which goes round by God, and is sifted and purified in the very act of submission to His eye. If you sweep this away, there is no little danger of falling back into the jealous, exigeant, selfish type of affection which at best weighs out with scrupulous care the exact debt. Moreover, there is nothing more *narrowing* to the character than even true human love devoid of a deep faith. Its very nobleness, being without trust, tyrannises over the mind, and would take the place of Providence in anxious guarding against fate. The atheist can scarcely admit any claim higher than a strong personal affection, since he believes that no *better* being is claiming his service, and that no immortality can ever repair the final evil of separation. Yet the very narrow anxiety that would thus supplant a hopeful trust, and limit the aims and activity of man to cheat separation a little longer of its pain, is apt to foil its own end, and cool the affection which thus unnaturally limits the range of life. Once realise Atheism, and it will soon appear that affection must waste itself away without that separate life of responsibility to its Inspirer which it does not acknowledge; and further, if that could be otherwise, that it would soon eat into the healthy active energy of man, if it had no Infinite Love to *trust*, while it had a certain impending fate to *fear*.

But turning now from this tendency in Atheism to impair the authority of the moral faculties and the worth of the personal affections, let us consider how far it affects the worth of that one great idea for the sake of which it considers all these sacrifices as nothing. If God be dislodged from our thoughts, will *Truth* cover a wider area, and gain a deeper significance? Will it spread itself over that world of thought from which the image of

God is banished, absorb into itself the sacred attributes with which theists invest Him, and supply any thing analogous to the softening influence of personal reverence? Clear the mind of God, and truth is reduced almost to mere knowledge—true "*information.*" The aggregate of the actual and *temporary* relations between the short-lived intelligent beings, the animals, the plants, the stones, the forces, which are thrown together in more or less permanent connection in this big round and rather empty sphere of space, would then constitute Truth. The *highest* truth would be the account of observed and quite *momentary* influences of human minds upon each other, such as the relation of the vestiges of Shakespeare's mind to the quickly vanishing generations of his successors,—in short, the momentary relations of minds ceasing to have relations to *any thing* in a few brief years. The most *permanent* truth would be the *lowest,*—facts about cohesion, gravity, and mineral life. Nay, suppose that—what is quite possible—physical science discovers some gradual destructive agency, which would, in the course of years, remove man wholly from that universe in which for a few centuries he has managed to live in curious wondering contemplation of the irrational silence around him. This law, when discovered, would itself be a part of this "sacred" truth which Atheism worships in the place of God. It would be the widest, and to us the most important generalisation of actual fact hitherto attained. The knowledge that a time was coming when the law of gravitation (or perhaps not even that) shall be left in undisputed possession of the limitless blue spaces, and when there would not even be any one any where to *know* that the "eternal truth" of nothingness had survived its evangelists,—this knowledge, we say, if it were attainable, should be "sacred" to the minds of the discoverers, if, at least, it is to *bare fact,* as such, that sacredness belongs—if it depends only on the *certainty* of the fact announced, and not in any way on the *quality* of that fact—*i. e.* on the kind and number of the influences it puts forth over our nature. With the theist, "THE TRUTH," as distinguished from *mere* reality, signifies the whole mass of eternal *personal* influences which he believes to bind together God with man, and man with man through God. It is therefore "sacred" to him as affecting the highest life of man, and as affecting that life eternally. But blot out this eternal spiritual centre of creation, and what is left for truth to include except a *rationale* of relations of which the *least* human are then believed to be the *most* permanent, and the highest of all are not only almost momentary for individual men, but perhaps quite transient for the race itself? If we believe in no Immutable Reality, truth itself must change with history, and at best is nothing more than a rough

computation of the law of change. To tell how human lives influence each other for the present, and are likely to influence each other while things go on in the main as they do now,—and how they stand related to the rocks, and the ocean, and the lightning, and the world of plants and animals,—this is the highest import of "truth" to the atheist's mind. The man who could resolutely keep down his conception of "truth" to this standard would scarcely feel it very sacred, or worthy of much costly sacrifice. It is the ever-retreating horizon of an eternal life, and faith in the inexhaustibly fresh possibilities of every opening relation between character and character, and awe at the new insight into our dependence on God, which unconsciously or consciously gives its fascination and sacredness to the search after "truth." The tendency of Atheism is to lower this feeling into mere curiosity craving "information."

We have thus sketched the main features of the character which Atheism, fully realised, would tend to generate in an *awakened* moral nature. We have attempted to show that it would tend to weaken and even shatter the authority of conscience, to sow despondency in the heart both as to personal and human progress, to reduce personal affection to a narrow and selfish type, and to exorcise all the fascination and grandeur in the conception of truth. Still, the atheist may reply that even if he admit all this, it only goes to prove that the existence of God is *desirable*—not that it is real; that men would benefit by believing in Him, if they could see ground to believe in Him. As Mr. Holyoake insists, human wants and wishes must not be allowed to create a delusion for their own satisfaction. "Presentiments" must not be regarded as "proofs of external existence." Yet we apprehend that human nature is so constituted, that being once convinced of the deteriorating influence of Atheism, it would feel an overwhelming conviction that Atheism is untrue. If once convinced that *trust* is the natural and necessary atmosphere of the *highest* culture, no one would easily be persuaded that such culture was unattainable except at the cost of believing in a phantasm. For though genuine and thorough Atheism need not shrink from the assertion that man could make for himself in imagination a much more successful and much nobler world than is attainable in fact, yet this is exactly the point at which atheists show that they are really above their opinions. Where is the atheist who does not profess Atheism expressly because he persuades himself that it gives the *highest* and freest play to human nature? Yet, in assuming this, he assumes that truth must be (morally) *best* for the mind, and that therefore whatever is morally best for the mind is true. Thorough Atheism might consistently enough assert, if it admitted ultimate and inex-

plicable moral distinctions at all, that belief in some fictions would produce a higher cast of mind than bare reality. Yet such Atheism is indeed rare, and usually abandons all belief in a moral "better and worse," rather than admit this.

We are not attempting to *prove* the existence of God. We firmly believe that God alone can finally convince any man of His own existence. But it is possible to point out the lines of ascertained fact which converge on this truth. It is possible to *prepare* men's minds for the discernment of the truth,—to point out the directions in which it may be most clearly seen. One of the most important of these we have already tried to indicate. There is, however, a vague, general dread that Science, if fairly faced, is atheistic in its tendency. Men are haunted with a phantom of a power that they dare not challenge, which is rumoured to have superseded and exposed natural theology, and to be gradually withdrawing, with inexorable hand, every fold of mystery from the universe, without disclosing any trace of the everlasting God. So far are we from believing this to be true, that we are satisfied there is striking indication of the fundamental necessity of Theism in the incredible incoherence of texture which Science, as a whole, presents to the thought without the theistic nexus. On every side alike—in the absence of this ground-faith—analysis unravels the component threads of reality, but dissipates, by some strange sleight of hand, the living force that wove them, and leaves us at last with a so-called "equivalent" for concrete fact, which, like dry colours scraped off a picture, has indeed been fetched out of actual existence, but which no power could ever constitute into it again.

The object of all science is said truly to be the attainment of unity. But unity is an ambiguous word; and there are two ideas concerning scientific unity in vogue, one of which is synonymous with *generality* or high abstraction, the other with the idea of a real tie or bond. The one notion of unity is derived from each *single* science, and is related to concrete fact exactly as universal truths are related to particular cases. Here the unity is really the unit of which the individual elements are fractions; there is no uniting, because there is no possibility of real separation even in thought. The special cases *constitute* the abstract whole; they cannot be *bound up* together, because they are only different aspects of the same thought. The other notion of unity is derived not from *single* sciences, but from the conjunction of *many*, and signifies the vinculum, or sheath, under which branches of thought or existence, really different in kind, are taken up into a single complex root or stem. In the former case the unity and the variety are both purely formal, and the tie or bond is metaphorical; in the latter case the unity is real—

holding together positively divergent thoughts, or distinct forms of existence. Now Science, properly regarded, aims, we believe, at reaching both these kinds of unity,—each in its right place. In each single science it aims at generalising the particular cases into the abstract formula which includes them all—at getting back to the fundamental conception of the science from studying to comprehend all its phenomena in one law. But true *universal* science does not attempt to ignore real differences of *kind* between the special phenomena of its various branches; and therefore it aims not at falsely identifying radical distinctions, but at finding out how they may be really united without being confounded.

The real unity, then, at which true science aims is unity of conception. Where it can identify apparent varieties as mere modifications of one and the same conception, it does so, and creates *a* science. When, on the other hand, it can make the universe *conceivable to us* only by admitting, to the full, specific and ultimate differences of *kind* in its phenomena, it admits those differences, and studies to find a higher unity, not by further generalising, but by looking for a uniting *power*. The only test we have of the truth of scientific hypothesis is the degree of power it gives us in *representing to ourselves* at will the facts of the universe without distinct individual study of each. Hence nothing is less scientific than any hypothesis which tries to run one set of facts into another without justification, in order to evade the admission of a distinct root. Instead of increasing our power of representing the universe, such a procedure confuses and disturbs it. Why was Copernican astronomy preferred to the old Ptolemaic astronomy? First, because it rendered the mental representation of the facts studied simpler than before; next and most, because it suggested new and true representations of relations not hitherto represented to the mind at all. It was one step towards a justification, to find that we could conceive as simple relations what had hitherto been conceived as most complex relations; but when that mode of conceiving the planets' motions suggested modes of including quite other relations (such as the motion of bodies on the earth's surface) in the same thought,—that is, not only simplified what had before been reduced to definite conceptions, but reduced other facts within the scope of the same definite conceptions,—the thing was regarded as certainly established. Of course it could not be *proved*. No one can see what force keeps the earth in her orbit, or the moon in her's, or what draws the stone to the ground. It is still quite *conceivable* that no such forces exist at all, but quite different and far more complicated forces, producing the same effects. But the belief in the new astronomy is grounded on the assump-

tion that whatever hypothesis gives our reason the widest power of representing actual fact, gives us that power just because it is the reflected image of actual fact. For instance, why do scientific men daily attach more and more credit to the wave-theory of light, and less and less (we believe) to the atom-theory of matter? Simply because the former not only enables them to represent all that is hitherto known, but daily increases their power of representing to themselves hitherto unknown relations of light and colour. It is a *working* hypothesis, opening up ever new explanations of relations hitherto more or less outlying and unattached. The latter (the atom-theory) has, on the other hand, never represented any thing but the combining proportions of chemical substances, and is a mere arbitrary form of that. It is a dead addition to the law of combining proportions,—needless to it, suggesting nothing beyond it. All science, then, aims at enabling us to represent fact more and more completely to our own minds. It takes accurate representative power as its best test of reality. Hence any attempt to merge the *distinctive* characteristic of a higher science in a lower—of chemical changes in mechanical—of physiological in chemical—above all, of mental changes in physiological—is a neglect of the radical assumption of all science, because it is an attempt to deduce representations—or rather misrepresentations—of one kind of phenomena from conceptions of another kind which do not contain it, and must have it implicitly and illicitly smuggled into them before it can be extracted out of them. Hence, instead of increasing our power of representing the universe to ourselves without the detailed examination of particulars, such a procedure leads to misconstructions of fact on the basis of an imported theory, and generally ends in forcibly *perverting* the least-known science to the type of the better known.

These remarks apply almost *necessarily* to any view of science that excludes the conception of a primary mind in the universe; unless indeed it be bold enough—which it never is—to assert that at *every stage* in the evolution of the universe new phenomena throng into existence, self-created, which had *no* previous equivalent, no spring or source of being at all,—which admit, in short, of *no* analysis into any antecedent phenomena. If this be admitted, then Science is a body of thought, which, starting from concrete reality, utterly *loses* a thread at every step back into the past, till it unravels into the "Absolute Nothing." Mental phenomena fall off first into the "Absolute Nothing," as they rose last out of it; then vital phenomena drop away, then organic, then chemical, then mechanical, lastly geometrical; and Science has *rendered* her account by gradually wiping out her score. This system, which deifies the creative power of Zero, is the

boldest but also absurdest form of Atheism. In it Science boasts to be identical with Nescience. No one ever seriously held it, though of course it has been *maintained.*

But, Nihilism apart, science *can* only be atheistic through the confusion of the two kinds of unity we have mentioned—*i. e.* through that extreme analysis which admits no *radical* differences of *kind* in the phenomena of the universe at all, and proposes therefore to deduce all the complex combinations from the more simple, and these again, ultimately, from some highly abstract and simple formula or unit of existence—the nutshell of the universe —by pure analysis of that unit into its constituent elements. This danger might be escaped, if such speculators chose to maintain that Reason is absolutely incapable of uniting the particular sciences into a single whole, and can neither analyse one into the other nor find any living tie or knot by which to combine them, but must be content to bring their common analogies to light, and keep their distinctive phenomena apart. But this is exactly what Atheism almost always will not do. Indeed, could Atheism take this course, it could scarcely long survive as Atheism. To admit the reality and irreducible nature of mental phenomena—to admit that they can *not* anyhow be analysed into physical—is either to put a period to all inquiry as to cause, or to open a broad way into Theism; and the less men believe in an Infinite Being, the more thirsty usually is their curiosity about the supposed genesis of our mental nature.

The result is, that the problem of all atheistic philosophers has been, not to find the *real* ultimate link between the different classes of natural force and life, but to soften away as much as possible the one into the other, so as to make the *transition imperceptible,* and so introduce a thoroughly new creative force *as if* it were but an expansion of that beneath it. It is a mere self-deception of philosophy, to accept the graduality of the stages by which life ascends from the gravitating force of inorganic matter to the highest pinnacle of human reason as any sort of evidence that the universe was all implicitly involved in its earliest stage. This is the fallacy of *petitio principii,*—assuming, contrary to all evidence, that all forces and all organisms, and all life and all reason, lie shut up implicitly (*i. e.* without any manifestation or possible symptom of existence) in that which seems possessed of no force and no organism, and no life and no reason. If this assumption be not made, then, as we know only of one great power totally escaping sensible analysis and yet able to effect sensible changes—the power of mind,—the natural assumption is, that the actual and sensible additions to existence come out of that power. What is gained by showing the *graduality* of the transition from one creative process to another? Because only a *small* addition

has been made to the living resources of the world—is it any the more possible to *identify* it with that which it is not? Because the boundary between vegetable and animal life is but little distinct, can we any the more ignore the fact that some fresh power has been given to the world when a locomotive capacity gradually creeps into it? Because the creeping is so gradual, is it any the more possible to identify it with no-creeping? Because the automatic action in the infant very slowly opens into consciousness, is consciousness at all the more capable of identification with automatic action? Because instinct is the unconscious *instrument* of adapting means to ends, and intelligence the conscious and voluntary adapter of means to ends, shall we talk of the *germinal intelligence* in the processes of the bee? As correctly, or more correctly (for the act *may* become semi-conscious and semi-voluntary), might we talk of the *intelligent cough* by which a man adapts (without consciousness) the action of his lungs to the removal of an obstruction in the windpipe. This attempt to analyse away the positive additions of creative power, by merely noting how gradually they steal into the universe, appears to us to show most strikingly how the absence of theistic faith tends to expel reality from science, and to make philosophy the universal *solvent* of fact, instead of the spirit which investigates the order, correspondence, and the ultimate connections of all fact in the concrete and complex unity of the highest life. The positive school, just because they start from no personality, no actual union of distinct living attributes in their original unity, are obliged to expel all personality, all originating activity, from their final result. What they see is in fact only a development of an abstract Creative Function into minor organs, which, when taken separately, are called creatures. Thus, by far the most able recent writer of this school, Mr. Herbert Spencer, looks for his definition of "life" from a survey of all the phenomena, vegetable, physiological, and psychical, of which it is ordinarily predicated. He defines it thus: "Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations;" or more at length, but less simply: "Life is the definite combination of heterogeneous changes, both simultaneous and successive, *in correspondence with external coexistences and sequences.*" Now if Mr. Spencer only meant by this to indicate, that which *all* forms of what is ordinarily termed life have in common, we should be grateful for this contribution to the analysis of a most complex conception. But he slides in immediately what we may call the axiom of the positivist school, that all differences among phenomena are differences of degree—differences in the *stage* of expansion—not differences of *kind;* and so proceeds to deduce that the highest mental life has nothing

more in it than is indicated in this definition. He first overlooks, ignores, rejects, the *special* characteristics of personal life —which would be legitimate in forming an abstract idea—and then, forgetting that it *is abstract*, and that all the *differentia* of the highest kind of life has been neglected, he clips down that highest kind of life to the limits of his definition. There is positively nothing in his conception of the higher life to indicate a real difference *of kind* between man and a vegetable. He must therefore, of course, reject originating power—free-will in man. He does so; and thus defends his position:

"Respecting this matter, I will only further say, that free-will, did it exist, would be entirely at variance with that beneficent necessity displayed in the progressive evolution of the correspondence between the organism and its environment. That gradual advance in the moulding of inner relations to outer relations, which has been delineated in the foregoing pages—that ever-extending adaptation of the cohesions of psychical states to the connections between the answering phenomena, which we have seen to result from the accumulation of experiences, would be arrested, did there exist any thing which otherwise determined their cohesions. As it is, we see that the correspondence between the internal changes and the external coexistences and sequences must become more and more complete. The continuous adjustment of the vital activities to the activities in the environment, must become more accurate and exhaustive. The life must become higher and the happiness greater—must do so because the inner relations are determined by the outer relations. But were the inner relations to any extent determined by some other agency, the harmony at any moment subsisting, and the advance to a higher harmony, would alike be interrupted to a proportionate extent; there would be an arrest of that grand progression which is now bearing humanity onwards to perfection."

—which only means that Mr. Spencer thinks free-will *à priori* unlikely, simply because it is not a self-adjusting *apparatus*, but a self-adjusting spirit; because it is not determined absolutely by the external world, but determines itself after free intelligent judgment on both worlds, internal and external. "The psychical states," as Mr. Spencer denominates a *man*, "cannot determine their own cohesions." We do not know a more remarkable instance of the confusion between the *unity* of the sciences and the *identity* of the sciences (a confusion which always results from ignoring the personal origin of the universe) than is given by this development of voluntary life out of the idea of vegetable life. In the vegetable, he says, the self-preservative correspondence between internal and external changes is simple, limited to a narrow region of space, and almost limited to the present moment in time. In the animal, with the gradual growth of a nervous system, the correspondence becomes much

more full—extends over a wider region in space (as when the bee is driven far and wide for its honey), and reaches over a longer time (as in the instincts which provide against the future emergencies of seasonal change). In the intellect of man it reaches its acme by the ripening of forecasting instincts into a widely-ranging consciousness. The "afferent" nerves bring reports to the brain,—the common-hall through which, now, almost all sensations pass, and where they establish a mutual understanding, so as to have their reports compared, connected, and enlarged. Here, too, ensues the *conflict* as to which of the "afferent" nerves shall get the command of the "efferent" nerves which convey motory impulses from the brain. This conflict is what we mean by voluntary choice. The psychical states, which are too weak to win, and are merely *candidates* for an "efferent" nerve, are our passive memories, emotions, and the like. The victorious candidates are our *volitions*. And this is the *rationale* of our moral nature!—physiology excluding from mental life all that does not suit the scientific analogies in her own domain! Have we not some reason for saying that this is a *confusion* of the sciences, not a *unity* of the sciences? Is it not clear that this positive method puts into the higher science as little more than it gets from the lower science as it can possibly help?—that it strives to varnish over their distinctions, instead of to combine them? How could even the semi-intelligent life of the higher animals be described merely as a cohesion of psychical states, if the notion did not come up from the vegetable world beneath? The unity that was not in the source cannot be in the result. A cohesion of simultaneous and serial changes is all that is seen in the vegetable, and therefore a cohesion of simultaneous and serial changes is all that can be found in the man! And here perhaps is to be found the most conspicuous practical confutation of *both* the atheistic systems of science—that of the positivists, which maintains that to discover the absolute serial order of events is attainable, and is alone attainable; and that of the common materialism, which refers every thing to the slow evolution of definite and eternal force;—that they both founder helplessly on the fact of human responsibility and freedom. They *could* not logically include the recognition of this fact; and if not sooner, yet here at least, they come into collision with the certain self-knowledge of man. Nature cannot give what nature has not got. If all the lower laws of force and life are absolutely fixed, definite, inviolable, then they cannot revoke their own constitution when they issue out of physiology into mental life. If it is the essence of all things to follow fixed laws, if there is nothing but unchangeable force moulding the universe by its gradually accumulating strength—then the conscience of man is a delusion,

and must be explained away. If the pressure of necessity is really removed just at the very point where the sense of the awful importance of our choice is most intensely realised,—if the iron chain of events by which our course is guided is unclasped, and we are permitted to go either to the right hand or to the left, just when we are most distinctly conscious that a false step is an irretrievable and infinite evil—then we cannot be the offspring of law, or embodiments of definite force. The logic of Atheism is consistent, but fatal to itself. We know that we are morally free; and we know that a free person cannot be the issue of helplessly unfolded laws. It is impossible for necessity to emancipate itself. Only if the observed necessity has been the "must" of a divine free-will, can that "must" be withdrawn, and freedom restored wherever the materials for self-determination have been granted. This identity of all sciences is maintained only at the expense of the falsification of many, and the total abrogation of one. The main facts of man's moral nature,—all those which we indicate by personal responsibility, duty and sin, merit and demerit, praise and blame, reward and retribution,—all those on which the great interests of mankind centre, all which are the life of reverence and love,—are swept away into totally meaningless unreality by this absolute identification of moral science with the natural sciences on the summit of which it stands. It is dangerous enough to scientific reality to confuse intelligence with instinct, and to describe memory as "a weak form" of perception; but it is the suicide of a science to manufacture a theory of moral obligation out of the materials of physical necessity—a theory of vision for the blind.

To those who believe in a personal Creator, on the other hand, all the sciences will keep at once their distinct meaning and their real (not logical) unity. We have seen how Intelligence and Activity have to be traced in any theory which is not theistic through stages in which there is nothing worthy to be called the semblance of either up to their final culmination in man, to whom the former alone is attributed, and all but the faintest ghost of the latter is still denied. Denying the world to a Creator, they are obliged to deny all creative power to the world. But begin with faith in a living Spirit, and it becomes impossible to believe in energy that is not instinct with reason, or in an intelligence that is not the background of action. Force and design are but the different elements of the same creative purpose. There is no force, however constant and determinate, that we can forbear to attribute to free *self*-determined life. We know that force, though sometimes called material, is always *invisible*, and that no one ever yet discovered an *original* fountain of force except in the depths of his own mind. Physical science can indeed

lay bare the contracting muscles and the transmitting nerves; but in its search after the seat of force itself it has to confess itself as unsuccessful as in its gropings after the substance of thought. In volition, and in volition alone, do we become conscious of any creation of force; all the so-called "material forces" are but the mapped-out courses of an invisible power. In the control of passion, the strenuousness of thought, the groaning strain of perseverance, we have the first and purest knowledge of the birth of force; and even though the nerve be paralysed which is the condition of its material manifestation, we are none the less certain that the essence of it is there. If we can conceive force except as activity, if we can conceive activity otherwise than as belonging to a mind, then may we regard force as material. But how is it that, after centuries of history, in which almost all the motion and all the forces on the surface of the earth have originated without human control, we are still as unable as ever even to conceive that either motion or power can originate in a lifeless mass,—unless it be a principle of our nature to refer all change to mind? When Newton discovered for us that every particle of our own bodies is the centre of an attraction that reaches the farthest star, did he discover the secret of a power *less* or *more* remarkably instinct with life and intelligence than that of the volition which moves our arm and guides our steps? Has any study of "gravity" ever made a rational man seriously believe that mere clay or granite can reach out its arm on every side into infinite space and regulate its fascination according to the inverse square of the distance? Yet if there be not some radical protest in our nature *against* believing this, we ought to find no difficulty in it; for all that mere *experience* teaches us is to refer these forces to a local beginning in particles of apparently inanimate matter; and it is only the positive evidence of our own minds which obliges us to regard these physical points as the organic centre of a spiritual force. It is only because we are obliged to accept *Force* and *Order* as the realised forms of a spiritual *Will* and *Reason,* that we have not long ago, at Newton's hint of the truth, bowed down in idolatrous worship before natural powers so far exceeding in grasp and precision any thing that human will or reason can comprehend. The only forces we can ourselves put forth are spiritual, and are ordered by our finite intelligence;—and we are compelled to believe that the infinite forces which react upon us, and by which we are hemmed in, are of the same kind; and of their *intellectual* regulation every day brings us clearer knowledge.

The science of force, then, is itself evidence of an all-pervading spirit to those who will admit as evidence the imperative assertions of their own nature. Thus far we share, in our little

degree, the creative power of God. And so far as physical science is becoming more and more dynamical, we may have some faint glimmering of the meaning and method of creative life. Here, however, our originating power totally ceases. Into the mystery of that higher creation, which is more than the creation of ordered force, we have no glimpse. But this at least we can see, that with every new accession of force there is a corresponding accession in the intellectual complexity of creation, Reason and Will manifesting themselves ever in perfect concord. With the forces which determine chemical combinations comes the development of the distinctive *qualities* of the inorganic world; with the forces of organic life in the flower and the tree comes the first dawning of that spiritual beauty with which the sense of perfect harmony impresses us,—the variety in unity, —the penetration of the loveliness of the whole into the essence of the minutest part. It is not without reason, we believe, that the "argument from design" has fixed so eagerly on organic life. Not that reason is less transparent in the graduated attraction radiated from a pebble than in the lily of the field. But the variety in the latter—every part of which implies a whole, while the whole needs every part—drives out of the mind the bald simplicity of rational *formula*, replacing it by the rich conceptions of imaginative beauty. A force which we can understand and measure seems almost on a level with us; but organic life comes from a spring we cannot fathom. The equal penetration of every fibre with vital beauty, the perfect incarnation of an ideal conception, the harmony of the whole, express the lavish wealth of intellectual *being*; while in lower stages of existence there is comparatively but the bare outline of single-phased *purpose*. You can separate, in imagination at least, the force and the law in physical science; but in organic life the evolution of the former is utterly shrouded in the multiplied and delicate folds of creative thought. And then again, in the world of animal life we have the first hint of a new created *object* apart from the mere beauty of creation. The appearance of a new subject on the scene,—the first dawn of receptive and observing life,—the birth, so mysterious to us, of finite *wants*,—the first lending of the creative energy to the development of a finite individuality, though as yet its springs of life are entirely commanded from beyond itself,—this vast stride in the exercise of creative *power* is accompanied as before by a vast increase in the fulness and subtlety of intellectual *law*. Every new energy is, as it were, more and more richly inlaid with intelligence, up to the point at which, in human freedom, the two become *separable*, in order that we may feel that it is free-will, and not any blind necessity, which determines their cohesion—that they are correlative at-

tributes of one spirit, not mere formally different aspects of the absolute and everlasting identity of an iron fate. In the ascending scale of animal life there is used to some extent almost every material afterwards worked into the nature of man, except his guiding conscience and the freedom which it is given to guide. Images of what man would be, if he could surrender his moral freedom and become a *thing* ("in perfect correspondence," as Mr. Spencer has it, "with external changes"), abound throughout creation, from the beaver to the tiger, from the butterfly to the bee, from the serpent to the dove; as if to mark by the very closeness of approach the infinite step in creative power made by the transition to the *personal* life of man. And here, immediately on the gift of free power and responsibility, the link of apparent necessity which seemed absolutely to cement together force and intelligence drops away, and there comes in a possibility of folly, failure, evil, unknown to the lower world, marking, as we have said, that the correspondence of intelligence with power in the sciences does not consist in the absolute identity of a self-expanding unit, but in the bond of a living character.*

* It is common to object to the view here developed of all *force* as the mere realised activity of free-will in some spiritual being, and of all intelligence which is not due to the conscious life of man as springing *directly* from above, that it is *pantheistic*. The objection is self-destructive if it proceeds from any one who believes that God *originally* made the world; for clearly nothing is saved, and much lost, by attributing to His fore-ordination what we hesitate to attribute to His present act. The objection, however, that to attribute the ferocity of the lion or the cunning of the fox directly to divine activity is at once *unreal*, *i.e.* unlike the truth, and degrading to our religious nature, *has* a meaning in it, and is worth briefly analysing. First, we believe, that if by this a protest is meant against the doctrine that there is no psychical individuality in animal life—that their body is but a shell as it were for an energy of which Deity is the subject as well as the spring,—that their perceptions are but new viaducts from creating power without to the same creating power within,—then the protest is quite just. However absolutely and necessarily dependent the animal world is, we must suppose that there is a real creation of a new subject—a real centre of new finite life; though the springs of that life are held in absolute subordination, and its energies *lent*,—not only created but ever sustained,—by the universal Spirit. This, however, in no way affects the moral question of the impressions produced upon us by the permanent *sanction*, so to speak,—the constantly sanctioning intelligence,—by which God guides and satisfies instincts so startling. This objection is one which applies equally to every form of faith. And it is but trivial; indeed the difficulty is often created by our fancifully inserting a human freedom and conscience behind the impulses of the animal. Or if that reply be thought evasive, and it be said, "Still, what you deny to be evil in the creature, you attribute to the Creator," it is more than sufficient to answer, "Yes; but the inference as to *will* and *character* must not be judged here by the single act, but by the system of invariable law, of which it is a part." It would be Pantheism, perhaps, to interpret the tiger's spring as embodying the *immediate* moral purpose and character of God, though it be His *immediate* sustaining power and directing thought which renders it possible The *purpose* must be studied, if at all, in the ends answered by the certainty of physical law in these lower departments of the universe as combined with the general purposes of animal life. So far as we may really interpret God by *single acts*, we must keep fast to His free moral relations with our spirits, which are the *only* accessible expressions of His immediate intent and *present* thought.

We do not, of course, suppose for a moment that any kind of opinion—theistic or atheistic—would change the inductive method of investigation in each separate science; but we do believe, for the reasons stated, that Atheism leads to the falsest and most misleading theories on the correlation of the sciences, disposing men to ignore real accessions of fact from the desire to make one science an expansion of another. The disposition to explain away new phenomena into old is really rooted in an absolute, if often unconscious, distrust of the *possibility* of creation. And in this way the misapprehension of the relation between different sciences leads to a deductive, instead of a pure inductive, method with the later and higher science. Thus we find philosophers like Mr. Spencer, instead of *examining* the moral realities of human life, actually dissipating or distorting them, in the hope of *deducing* them from physiological assumptions. How could any true Baconian induction dissolve the moral will of man into a contest between a mob of "motor changes" in the brain? The fact obviously is, that the human intellect *must* and will believe in *some* cause for human life, and the only choice lies between one that is far greater and one that is far less than that life. If, therefore, we do not reverently accept a higher cause, we are unconsciously obliged so to "treat" and clip the facts as to make them fit into a lower. The unconscious tendency to dissolve away or pinch up the reality is always more or less the result of believing in no antecedents adequate to produce it.

But we must conclude. We have barely touched on some of the most remarkable indications that man's nature is every way dwarfed by Atheism, and that Science, so far as it gives evidence at all, gives strong evidence of the same kind. Instead of being a source of uneasy fear and suspicion, we have tried to show that, fairly faced, Science adds all its strength to the side of trust. One branch of the subject we have entirely omitted—the evidence of the imagination to the intellectual and spiritual origin of Nature's beauty. There is, we believe, a conviction, amounting to certainty, in every poetic mind, that the face of nature wears as clearly the mysterious impress of an infinite character as the face of man wears the impress of the workings of thought and emotion within. No one ever yet explained why smiles and frowns *always* convey to all people, and even to the merest infant, the same notions of joy and displeasure. This is a *natural* language, of which the knowledge is inborn, and which no law of association can explain. We believe confidently that the same is true—with vaguer meanings—of the expressive power of Nature,—that all poetic insight sees that it as vividly bears the spiritual stamp of God. But on this we

cannot enlarge. We believe that the one greatest indication visible to an *unconvinced* mind of the being of God lies in the evidence previously adduced as to the relative *types* of atheistic and theistic character,—that is, in the universal feeling that the attitude of conscious personal dependence (we would say *humility*, but that even the atheist may feel that scientific and social humility are virtues to him also) is the most favourable for the growth of *all* high qualities. Take a man, however high, however far beyond all other men, so that *human* leaning is impossible and mischievous; and who will not feel that, in order still to grow, he must still look upward and rest in a Being higher than himself? Fuller evidence than this of the *direction* of the truth it is impossible to adduce. *Conviction* must be personal. No one can actually *manifest* God to another. But there are few, we believe, of those who anxiously seek, who do not ultimately attain a clear vision of the truth that "*no* man hath quickened his own soul," and that in this truth is involved not the despair, but the deepest peace of man.

Art. V.—THE PRESENT STATE OF FRANCE.

Napoléon le Petit. Par Victor Hugo. London, 1852.

It is not, of course, our intention to say one word of this ebullition of acrimonious patriotism. We design, indeed, to speak of the remarkable person to whom it relates; but we shall do so from other information, and in a far different spirit.

It is always with diffidence and misgiving that we ought to speak of foreign nations, especially in their political and social relations. A stranger's information must always be so inadequate and incomplete; it must so generally be second-hand, and therefore liable to come to him in a distorted and partial shape; it must need, before it can be fully understood, so many elucidations, so many corrections from modifying sources, that, even when his materials are most ample, he must feel much like a man prescribing or speculating in the dark. The more varied the quarters from which he derives his knowledge, the more numerous and opposite the individuals whom he is able to question and consult, the greater will generally become his bewilderment, and the deeper and more hopeless his benightment. If he relies mainly on official materials, these are invariably meagre and often falsified. If he dwells much on newspapers, how is he to know which speak public sentiment or guide it, and which are the mere uninfluential organs of a man or of a clique? or which,

again—like the *Times*, the *Presse*, and the *New York Herald*—owe a vast circulation to accidental and extraneous causes, and are about the most unfaithful exponents extant of the real, permanent, deliberate opinion of the effective portion of the nation? If he endeavours to instruct himself thoroughly by intercourse with living witnesses, every thing he hears bears the impress of personal prejudice or party passion, and requires a terrible amount of sifting before it can be used. And if he determines to see and judge for himself, the chances are that years of residence will be needed before he will have learned the language, and imbibed the spirit, and realised the *Stand-punkt* of the nation he is studying, sufficiently to enable him to observe with accuracy and penetration.

If these difficulties exist in every case, more especially must they be felt by every modest and conscientious Englishman when he undertakes to treat of France. The innate characters of the two people are so widely different that they have all the difficulty in the world in comprehending and doing justice to each other. They are cast in a distinct mould; they come of a separate stock; their temperaments are discrepant; their antecedents have divided them; their social wants and political wishes are not in harmony; their views of religion, of life, of government, of society, are intrinsically unlike. The entire civilisation of each people has a special aspect and idiosyncrasy of its own. The French are vivacious, mercurial, but comparatively sober; the English stolid, pertinacious, but, alas! very thirsty. *We* have an instinctive reverence for law and custom, and bow easily to what is elevated and to what is past; while their outbursts of license and endurance of despotic rule are alike amazing to us. We are very aristocratic, but sturdy in the assertion and employment of individual independence; they are vehemently democratic—as far as democracy consists in a passion for equality; but put up with restraints on personal liberty which would drive us frantic. Both of us endure oppressions and iniquities which it is utterly astounding to contemplate with the unfilmed eye of cosmopolitan reason, but we take different sorts of enormities under the protection of our capricious tolerance:—they have their meddlesome police and their terrible conscription;—we have our Court of Chancery and our marriage-law, and had our system of "impressment." A religious man in France is usually a good Catholic; a religious man in England will probably be a bitter Protestant. A high-minded Englishman is devoted to the idea of "duty;" a high-minded Frenchman grows enthusiastic at the name of "glory." Both people are individually as well as nationally ambitious and aspiring, but in a different temper and for different objects. Men in both countries are in haste to be rich;—but the Frenchman longs for wealth because it will purchase enjoyment and social consideration; the

Englishman desires it because it leads to greatness, and may end in making him a powerful millionnaire.

In addition to the difficulty of fully understanding and fairly and dispassionately judging our neighbours and allies, consequent on the inherent divergencies of character we have thus sketched out, other and special impediments exist at the present moment. We are deprived of some of our ordinary channels of information, and others are narrowed and vitiated. On many points we can only speak conjecturally as to the "present state of France," because it is undeniable that much information which it concerns the public to possess is wholly suppressed, and much comes to it diluted, adulterated, and obscured. Not only are we deprived of the enlightenment we might derive as to the general sentiment and mental and moral condition of the country, from the free and varied utterances of the press and the discussions in the daily journals; but there is reason to suspect that much goes on which is never suffered to transpire in public, and which we learn only from vague rumour, or through private channels. Local popular movements, individual violences, casual bursts of crime or of resistance, all of which are so many indications of social condition and political feeling,—do not find their way into the newspapers in France under the actual strict system of surveillance. In forming an opinion, therefore, from the facts before us, we must do so with the unsatisfactory proviso that many and significant facts are *not* before us.

Another obstacle arises from the virulence of party and personal feeling which prevails in France. It is difficult to find a man who can do justice to a political opponent, or who will candidly admit a hostile fact. Those attached to the existing *régime* will not allow any other to be possible, or any material modification of this one to be easy. Its opponents are all damaged or designing men—its critics all revolutionists in disguise. The adherents of the baffled dynasties or factions—the various sections of the "outs"—on the other hand, can scarcely be induced to grant that there is one good feature about the present system or the present man beyond the mere maintenance of order,—and that they consider dearly paid for. Many, indeed, admit that Louis Napoleon has been of service, and was even necessary for a while; but that time they deem now past or passing, and ere long, they say, he ought to give place to a more legitimate monarch, and to inaugurate a freer policy. But what that dynasty or policy should be—whether Orleanist, Bourbon, or Republican—is a matter of equally virulent dispute. Amid such animosities and obscurities—through such dark clouds and such bewildering glimpses of refracted and discoloured light—have we to grope our way, as best we can, to something like conclusive notions.

The religion of a country must always play a great part in modifying its social and political condition. It is not easy to give any clear or reliable account of the influence which either faith or the priesthood exercise in France. That influence has undergone many changes, has suffered rude reverses, has survived the most terrible and apparently fatal shocks. It seemed to have been utterly extinguished by the fearful storm of the first revolution; it scarcely recovered more than a formal and soulless existence under the smothering patronage of Napoleon; the decorous indifference of Louis XVIII., and the weak fanaticism of Charles X., rather hindered than assisted its restoration to command over the nation; nor could the universal materialism fostered by the Orleans *régime* have done much to augment its expansion or its vigour. The government of Louis Philippe, however, it should be said, aided it indirectly by keeping the clergy in official obscurity and in the background;—for it is an important fact which should be constantly borne in mind, that in France the priests are powerful *only when neglected by or in opposition to the government;* the instant they rally round the government, or are petted by it, they become objects of suspicion and contempt to the people. They are *déconsidérés* (as the phrase is) by the alliance. Still it is undeniable that, by some means or other, Catholicism has recovered much of its sway over at least a considerable portion of the French nation. Not only are the priests and the Church again powerful, but *belief* is once more sincere and widely diffused. This, however, is true, unfortunately, chiefly, though not exclusively, of one class. Many among the higher classes—legitimists in political opinion for the most part—adhere with earnestness of affection, and sometimes with real conviction, to the religion of their ancestors. It is *du bon ton* to be a good Catholic; *cela sent le gentilhomme,* as the phrase is. But it would be unjust to say that there is not something beyond this. A more serious tone has spread among these people. The severe sufferings they have undergone, the bitter humiliations they have had to endure, the startling vicissitudes which have come over their fortunes,—have in many instances worked a salutary change, have taught them to estimate more truly the trifling value and the uncertain tenure of all worldly goods, and have turned their thoughts insensibly to those feelings and doctrines whence man in his need is ever driven to seek strength and consolation. But even here it is chiefly the ladies who are observant of the rites and serious in the belief of their religion. The gentlemen are acquiescent and decorous; but something of the old, prevalent, half-unconscious notion that devotion is a feminine concern or occupation, like housekeeping or the care of children, seems still to linger among them.

Among the Orleanists those who are active believers are, we understand, most usually Protestants—a sect which in France maintains its ground, but does no more. The politicians, the middle classes, four-fifths of the ouvriers of the cities, and the Buonapartists, the army, and the government *employés*, are, we suspect, almost to a man indifferent or unbelievers. To them religion is a subject about which they know nothing and care not to interest themselves; and a priest is not a pastor or teacher to be listened to with deference, but simply the wielder of a certain political or social power who must be *counted with*. The case, however, is altogether different in some of the provinces, especially of the south and west, and among the peasantry. There the ignorance of the people is excessive, and the influence of the curés occasionally great; though the peasant, acute, shrewd, and keen, where his own affairs are concerned seldom allows priestly interference.

Louis Napoleon probably overestimated their influence. At the commencement of his career he courted them, and played into their hands in many ways, especially in the case of the law *du libre enseignement*, which virtually threw the education of the country into the hands of the Church. The priests, in their turn, seeing or fancying that they could make use of him for their own future purposes, political or ecclesiastical, laboured most zealously for his elevation. He has rewarded them for this, but by so doing has caused a strong reaction against them, as the tools and supporters of the constituted authorities; the Voltairian spirit is reviving, and dislike to priestcraft is beginning to re-diffuse a suspicion of religion. The Emperor, too, finds himself somewhat fettered in his policy by the necessity of retaining the adherence of these depositaries of local and secret power. In the affairs of Rome especially is this difficulty felt; and in the case of certain contingent possibilities it will probably be felt still more noxiously and keenly. The French troops were sent to restore the self-banished Pope, mainly no doubt with the view of maintaining and extending the influence of France in the affairs of Italy, but partly also as a bribe to the Church and the priesthood. The papal restoration was to have been accompanied with certain securities and promises of good government in future, and there appears to have been some sort of tacit understanding to this effect; but when once he was replaced by foreign arms upon his forfeited throne, Pio Nono laughed at his restorers, and refused to take a single step towards the realisation of their just hopes. Under the influence of bad advisers — his own terrors the worst advisers of all — he determined to govern exactly as he pleased; and he has governed as badly as possible. The French Government is understood to have petitioned and re-

monstrated, but in vain. The Pope is well aware, that as long as Rome is garrisoned by French troops he is safe from the vengeance or turbulence of his own subjects. He knows that Louis Napoleon will not withdraw his troops, however scandalously he (the Pope) may abuse the protection which their presence gives him; because if he withdrew them *simply*, they would be instantly replaced by Austrians, and Pio Nono would wish nothing better; if in withdrawing, he at the same time prohibited and prevented the Austrians from entering, he has been warned that a general massacre of the priests would be the immediate result; and such a catastrophe would raise a fearful and dangerous outcry against the Emperor among all the Catholics of France. In either case, too, the original object of the occupation—the maintenance of French influence in the Peninsula—would be effectually sacrificed, and the national pride and ambition would be severely mortified. The Emperor, therefore, is in a sort of cleft-stick, in a practical dilemma of the most painful character. He is nearly in the same position in which we find ourselves in Oude, the upholder of the most noxious and wretched government in the world. He cannot retire without humiliation and peril to his popularity at home; he cannot remain without seeing himself daily degraded into the real agent—because the permitting and *enabling* witness—of some of the lowest and silliest atrocities ever perpetrated by an ecclesiastical administration. If he were to give way to the disgust which we believe he feels, and say, "I will no longer aid or tolerate such things; I will either compel the Pope to govern well, or will leave him to the fate which he has earned,"—he would, indeed, relieve his conscience of a great crime and gladden the hearts of all the patriots in Europe; but he would incur the deadly enmity and the active opposition of the whole priestly party throughout France; and we doubt whether he could afford to do so.

The peculiarity which we have noticed above—the restriction, namely, of religious faith and sentiment in France principally to the lowest class—is one fraught with social mischief and peril of the saddest kind. It operates a separation between the different orders of society, which can never exist in a country without consequences of the deepest and widest significance. Not only does it divide them in their most intense and elevated sentiments; not only does it, therefore, pave the way for those jealousies and animosities of class which already exist with such fearful virulence in France; but it takes the people out of the hands of their natural chiefs, and places them under the guidance of self-chosen and artificial leaders. It severs them from the aristocracy, whether of rank, wealth, or talent, and delivers them over, easy victims, to the demagogue or the priest,—when the

priest happens to be in opposition to the government. That happy harmony, that safe political well-being, which exists where the higher ranks lead and influence the lower without being able to oppress them, is no longer possible in France. The peasants no longer look for advice, assistance, and leadership to the noble and the great, to the men of eminent ability and superior education, or to those large landed proprietors who still exist in many provinces. The popular sceptre has passed, we hope not irrevocably, into the hands of mere agitators, who will *exploiter* their power for their own personal objects or passions. There is nothing to wonder at in all this, though there is every thing to deplore: we note it merely as one of the bad symptoms in the social state of France; and that it arises much, if not mainly, from the cause we have assigned appears, among other indications, from this—that wherever we find instances of proprietors and nobles exercising their proper influence over the peasantry and *ouvriers* around them, they usually belong to families who are either hereditarily Catholic or individually pious.

To this last statement, however, we must admit one important and increasing exception, to which our attention has more than once been called by some of the most thoughtful politicians of France, and which they regard as likely largely to influence the future destinies of that country, and to influence them in a salutary direction. In former times, as is well known, the great families of France lived the chief part of the year on their estates, surrounded by their vassals, leading them during war, governing them during peace, and exercising over them an authority which, whether for good or evil, was little short of absolute, and an influence which was nearly irresistible. Sometimes their rule was benevolent and paternal, sometimes it was harsh, selfish, and extortionate; sometimes they were beloved, sometimes they were dreaded; but in all cases they were looked upon as a superior order of men, against whose sway—intellectual, moral, fashionable, or material—no one dreamed of rebelling. The same was true in a lesser degree of the smaller landed proprietors—of all, in fact, who belonged to the class of nobles or, as we should call it, of gentry. In the course of time, however, this state of society was gradually disturbed and undermined. More and more these families became attracted to the court; and once habituated to the refined luxuries and perpetual excitements of the metropolis, the dullness and coarseness of provincial life grew distasteful to them, and they lived year by year a longer time in Paris and a shorter time at their chateaux in the country. The sovereigns, bent upon humbling and superseding the vast power of the provincial nobility, encouraged this tendency by every means within their reach; residence at court was the proof of

loyalty, and the path to honours and employment; retirement to their provincial estates was considered to indicate disaffection, and was at length inflicted as a sign of disgrace. Under Louis XIV. this silent but momentous social revolution may be considered to have been consummated. In proportion as the nobles thus deserted their vassals and lived at a distance from their territorial possessions, their personal influence necessarily declined; they were seldom seen and little known; their peasantry were left to the tender mercies of stewards, who extorted from them in order to supply the increasing demands of their absentee lords; the estates were heavily mortgaged, and sometimes passed in portions into the hands of money-lenders. At last the aristocracy, great and small, of France, took to residing entirely in Paris; the tie between them and the poorer classes of the community was either wholly broken or became one of oppression only, and their political and social influence in the provinces was gone. This state of things reached its culminating point when the first revolution broke out; and we all know what the consequences were. After that, for a long series of years, political and military interests overpowered all others: Paris was the centre and the scene of these; and every one who either was or aspired to be any thing, found Paris the only possible dwelling-place.

Of late years, however, a slow but significant reaction has been taking place. Successive revolutions, and the increasing luxury and extravagant expenditure of metropolitan society, have worked their natural effects. The year 1830 saw the downfall of the ambitious projects and retrospective hopes of the legitimist nobility, many of whom retired in melancholy and disgust to such diminished estates as still remained to them. The revolution of 1848 did something of the same kind for the proprietors and politicians whose predilections were Orleanist; they found themselves ousted from their places, fallen from their high estate; and so they bowed to the storm, and went into the country to grow cabbages till the return of better days. Finally, the *coup-d'état* of December 1851 added yet a third class to these retiring and abdicating grandeurs. Numbers whose principles or connections would not allow them to "bow the knee to Baal," as they called it, or in any way to countenance the usurping dynasty, and to whom a Paris in which they had been somebody and were now nobody was hateful, retired in bitterness of spirit to try the fascinations of a rural life. In addition to these men, there were many families who had long been living beyond their means and were no longer in a condition to meet the expenses of a life in one of the gayest and most costly of cities—a city in which bankers, *agens de change*, and other *nouveaux*

riches, have introduced a style of gorgeous luxury which is at once distasteful and impossible to the "old families;"—and these were only too glad to take the opportunity of retiring to the country to retrench, and of ascribing to the dictates of political principle a course which was really due to pecuniary prudence or necessity. From these various sources there is gradually springing up a race of "country gentlemen" in France, somewhat analogous to our own, though at present far less educated and energetic, and from whom much ultimate good, both political and social, is anticipated. They are slowly acquiring the tastes and adopting the habits of their class; they are attending to agriculture, and introducing improvements which their poorer neighbours have neither the knowledge nor the capital to initiate; they are exchanging an exciting for a quiet life, and are acquiring by residence and intercourse that influence over the minds of their neighbourhood which their superiority in manners and education, imperfect as it is, entitles them to exercise. They are consulted, both on public and private matters, by the village-citizens around them, and are probably thus laying the foundation for much future usefulness. An unusually large number of this class were returned as members to the two last republican assemblies, and constituted that moderate element whose strength so agreeably surprised the world. Upon these gentlemen themselves the monotonous and sober life they lead is exercising a strong and natural though unconscious *conservatising* influence; and in future movements it is probable that they will at once prevent the metropolis from possessing that overwhelming and arbitrary power which has often proved so mischievous to France, and while restoring to the provinces their fitting share in the councils and decisions of the nation, will impress upon those provinces an unusual temper of aversion to wild and sudden change, and a disposition to hold by the settled and the stable. They will give a hitherto unknown weight to the stationary and restraining element in French society—to the drag, the ballast, and the anchor. Such at least is the hope and faith of many profound and close observers among the French themselves.

The most influential element in the present condition of France is, beyond contradiction, the character of the remarkable man who now governs it,—a character singularly difficult to estimate aright, because no Frenchman can speak of him dispassionately, and no foreigner can speak of him with a *complete* knowledge of all the facts necessary for arriving at a confident opinion. Nor does it always contribute much to the elucidation of the matter to hear opposing judgments; for though enemies and detractors may be alike in error, it by no means follows that to

strike an average between their statements is the way to hit the truth. We must speak, therefore, with some misgivings; but having watched his course carefully, and had an opportunity of conversing respecting him with men of all parties in France as well as here, we think we may be able to approximate at least to a correct understanding of his nature and his views. And, in the first place, we put aside as irrelevant all consideration of his moral character. We doubt whether, in our English sense of the word, he has one. He is capable, we believe, of strong, sincere, and tenacious affections—even of warm affections, as far as warmth of any kind can be predicated of a man of his singularly reserved and phlegmatic temperament. He is usually amiable to those about him, by no means devoid of consideration for them, and is liked, if not loved, by those who have lived with him and served him. We do not suspect him of any petty or malignant passions; it would seem as if he were much less subject to these than was his uncle. But of a *moral sense*, of an idea of *duty*, of a conscientious preference of right to wrong, of a perception even of the meaning of the words, we apprehend Louis Napoleon to be wholly destitute. This destitution is not rare in France. We could name more than one of their most eminent men in whom it is as marked as in the emperor. Louis Napoleon considers whether an action will further the end he has in view; if it will, it is to him right,—if not, it is to him wrong; or rather, in the one case it will be done, and in the other avoided, without the slightest reference to its moral quality. His object has all along been to govern France—probably to govern her well. He never had any doubt that it was well for France that he should govern her, or that he could govern her well. If he had ever doubted, it probably would have made no difference in his conduct; but we do not imagine that the question ever crossed his mind. He was determined to govern her; *it was written* that he should. Whatever, therefore, would contribute to his elevation was to be done, whatever was its nature. Whether it was culpable or laudable, just or unjust, kind or cruel, right or wrong, no more entered into his contemplation than would have done the colour of the cup out of which he was to drink the elixir of immortality. Like the sage in *Rasselas*, he shaped his course, not indeed with a view to "concur in the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity," but with a sole reference to the "fitness of things." Whether his seizure of the supreme power, and the steps by which he mounted to the throne, were a perfidious and heinous crime, as some aver, or a necessary, patriotic, beneficent, and therefore righteous course, as others hold, probably is a matter of profound indifference to his peculiar or non-existent conscience. They succeeded: *voilà tout!*

"*il marchait droit à son but ;*" not "he was RIGHT," but "*il avait* RAISON." We no more believe that he made or broke one supererogatory oath, or shed one drop of blood which he thought needless, than we believe that he would have hesitated to violate as many oaths or to shed as much blood as was clearly indispensable and conducive to the object to be attained. *Cela posé,* as our neighbours say, we may henceforth put his morality—the estimate of him as a good man or a bad man, a venial or a mortal offender—out of our consideration. He is a *daimonic* man; he has a mission; and destiny, not duty, is the guide and measure of his actions.

The next thing to observe is, that he really *does* govern. He has a strong fixed notion of doing his work. He is, in the true sense of the word, a ruler, a commander, an imperator. He did not usurp the throne merely to sit upon it. He did not seize the sceptre merely for the pride of possessing or the pleasure of looking at the bauble. He did not aspire to supreme power solely for the luxury or gratification it might yield him, though he is actually ravenous after every sort of pleasure. He sought and he values greatness, scarcely more for what it would enable him to purchase, than for what it would enable him to do. He holds the reins of government himself; he has none around who can control him, and but few who can materially aid him. He has his line of policy, home and foreign, spun in his own brain. He has his own ideas to work out; some profound, some shallow; some sagacious, some unwise; some prudent, some rash; some full of promise, some fraught with risk and mischief;—but all distinct, though by no means always consistent or *continuous.* He desires to make France great and prosperous—*under his reign.* He desires to distinguish his reign by embellishing the capital with works that will be *for him* a monument *ære perennius.* But he also, we believe, honestly, earnestly, fanatically desires to carry out certain measures of administration and certain principles of statesmanship, because, "much meditating on these things," he is convinced that they are desirable, fit, wise, proper—in a sense, right—independently of their possible bearing on his own prospects and position. He has, we have said, no moral conscience; but instead, and to serve him in the place of one, he has a clear intellect, an earnest purpose, a pertinacious will, and a sincere intention to govern effectively and well.

His knowledge is, we think, often imperfect; and his views therefore limited and inconsistent. His policy seems to be a compound of ideas inherited from his uncle, but modified, corrected, and enlarged by long and deep reflection; and still more perhaps by his observation of the working of free institutions in England and America. He appears to value the forms and rudi-

ments of representative government, but to have no belief in the present capacity of France to bear more than the forms, and assuredly to have no notion of allowing any forms whatever to take the substantive power out of his own hands. His views of commercial policy are far sounder than those generally prevalent in France, though still imperfect and inconsistent. He has seen too much of the effects of free-trade here not to be anxious to relax the rigid system of protection which has long prevailed in France, as several indications have shown — among them the appointment of Michel Chevalier, a known political economist, to the rank of *conseiller d'état*. But at the same time he is well aware that his steps in this direction must be gradual and cautious; and he makes no scruple to override the clearest principles of free-trade when political expediency, or reasons of temporary necessity, seem to him to dictate a violation of them. His arbitrary and extraordinary interference with the price of bread in Paris last year was an instance in point. Alarmed at the rapid and warranted advance in that first necessary of life, and warned by history of the close connection between dear bread and popular tumult, he compelled the bakers to sell at a lower price than they could afford (the municipality in the meantime indemnifying them therefor), promising at the same time to authorise them to retain the existing prices after the return of plenty would naturally have reduced them to a moderate level. In other words, he has ventured to attempt an artificial uniformity of price — to make the *average* price of years a constant and unchanging one. It cannot be believed that so unnatural a system can be carried out. Paris is glad enough now to pay a lower price for its bread than the surrounding country; but will never submit to pay a higher price when the existing pressure has given way to abundance. In the meantime, however, the metropolitan poor have been relieved, and the Emperor's aim has been partially attained. His recent interference with the price of butchers' meat — arbitrary and startling enough, no doubt—cannot be condemned on the same grounds, as the existing monopoly possessed by the butchers was a violation of all sound principle, and the Emperor's interference was only in mitigation of the inevitable consequences of such monopoly: it was, in fact, stepping in with one breach of economic laws to correct a previous and a worse one.

The lavish expenditure of public money, especially in Paris, since the Emperor's accession, has been severely blamed; and, viewed purely in an economic light, we cannot question the justice of the condemnation. Not only has he expended vast sums in fêtes, and social luxuries, and splendid shows, but he has borrowed, and compelled the municipal authorities to borrow, many

millions in order to carry out rapidly changes, some of which were not wholly improvements, and which, even where improvements, ought to have been spread over many years. He has been spending the *capital* of the country in order to *create* employment: a plan which political necessities may dictate for a brief space, but which is in utter defiance of all sound principle, and cannot be permanently continued without entailing certain reaction and wide-spread suffering and ruin. The following figures, which have been furnished to us from sure sources, will give some idea both of the expenditure and of the debts incurred. We must premise, however, that perfectly accurate authorised official returns of these sums are scarcely to be procured. Those we give are believed to be correct by persons best placed for ascertaining the truth. In the first place, then, when the war broke out, the friends of the government, and indeed nearly every one, agreed and avowed that any attempt to economise out of the current peace expenditure would be too dangerous; and, therefore, that the war must be entirely provided for by loans. We all know how eagerly and instantaneously the sums demanded were furnished by the people, and how skilfully, as an affair of policy, the matter was contrived. The peculiarity of the mode of borrowing was entirely the Emperor's own idea, and affords a very good specimen of the singular sagacity of the man. He offered very liberal terms to the lenders; but he declined to borrow, as usual, through the great lords of the money-market. He knew what vast sums were hoarded in small amounts throughout the length and breadth of France; he knew the difficulty the people had always felt in finding safe and profitable investment for their hoardings (a difficulty diminished, but not removed, by the increase of railroads); and he desired at once to secure to the great body of the people the profit on the loans, and to interest as large a number as possible in the security and permanence of his dynasty. He therefore borrowed *directly* from individuals, and gave a preference to the smallest sums. Subscribers under 500 francs were taken entire; subscribers for larger amounts only in proportion. We all know the complete success of the operation, and the enormous sums which the novel proposal brought forth from their hiding-places. Including the two great loans, the belief is that since the *coup-d'état* Louis Napoleon has borrowed 1,700,000,000 francs, including the augmentation of the floating debt, which has increased in four years about 200,000,000 francs. The same authorities assure us that the expenses incurred by the municipality of Paris, on account of the arrangement with the bakers as to the price of bread (mentioned above), reach some say fifty, some say 100,000,000 francs. For the embellishing of the city—in pulling down and rebuilding

on a grander scale—the Parisian authorities have had to contract three loans, the first of twenty-five millions, the second of fifty, the third of sixty; making a total of 135,000,000, or 5,400,000*l.* of our money. Of this, the alterations in the Rue de Rivoli and the Boulevard de Strasbourg alone cost, it is said, about 2,400,000*l.* The sums borrowed for similar purposes of improvement, *i. e.* of embellishment and employment, by the departments and communes (including the sales of the wood of the national domains), are stated to us at 300,000,000 francs. These facts and figures are alarming enough: what is yet more so is the establishment of the *Crédit Mobilier*, a society for borrowing and lending on various securities and on an enormous scale, and the designed, though for the present abandoned, plan of interference with the management of the Bank of France, the only institution in that country which has hitherto survived both popular outbreaks, dynastic changes, and administrative interference.

The Emperor's excuse for all these encouraged or enforced extravagances is, that at all hazards, and at any cost, "the people must be employed;" that tranquillity can be insured at no other or lower price. For a time, and to a certain extent, we may admit the plea as valid. His position is critical, and his necessities are great:

> "Res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt
> Moliri."

Even now, firmly fixed on the throne as he seems to be, he dreads the turbulence which may spring from suffering as his most formidable peril; and in order to avert it, we doubt not he will continue to borrow and to spend to any extent. The ten millions of francs which he has placed at the disposal of the *préfets*, to alleviate the distress of the actual scarcity and the coming winter, is an intimation of this. But all is not policy; something of weakness, of vanity, and of short-sighted imprudence, has mingled with and tainted his otherwise defensible proceedings. He has sometimes overshot his mark. His intense desire to write his name indelibly upon the country and, most of all, upon the capital, has led him to push forward his alterations with needless and injurious haste. He has begun new changes before old ones were completed; he has urged the municipality to undertake more than its funds were equal to; he has exceeded the powers of the *ouvriers* already in Paris, and has caused the influx of many more from the provinces,—an obvious blunder, and a source of future disquietude and peril; he has pulled down houses faster than purchasers or contractors could be found to undertake the new erections, and has thus caused heavy losses to the city authorities; and he has, by the same over-rapid proceedings, de-

prived thousands of workmen of their homes, and many audible murmurs have arisen in consequence. Every *improvement* dislodges numbers; and the labouring classes, who lived in the upper stories of the old dwellings, will find no quarters in the more splendid ones which are rising on their ruins. This is a source of great present inconvenience, and has laid the foundation for much future anxiety.

The arbitrary arrests, exiles, and deportations with which Louis Napoleon inaugurated his advent, and which so disturbed and alarmed France, soon ceased. Whether they were necessary, or whether he merely deemed them so; whether they were indispensable to the tranquillity of the country, or merely to the consolidation of his new-born power,—he appears to have had no intention of continuing a system so indefensible and revolting, or early to have perceived the wisdom of abandoning it. Arrests and imprisonments by order of the police, and not followed by any trial, may still occasionally take place; it is probable that they do; at all events, the degree to which the system of suppressing news is carried enables enemies of the government to assert this without liability to contradiction. But at least such cases are rare. The ordinary tribunals can and do deal with most delinquents, real or supposed. Many of the individuals at first imprisoned as a matter of precaution were speedily liberated; many of the exiles have since been permitted to return; and all of respectability and note might do so if they would consent to take the oath of allegiance to the existing *régime*. In one point, however, the despotism with which the Emperor began his reign has suffered no relaxation, or scarcely any, worth naming. The surveillance and control of the press is as rigid, minute, and unrelenting as ever; and his English admirers especially find it difficult to forgive this. They had hoped that, as soon as he was firmly seated on the throne, he would leave the public expression of opinion free; or, at all events, that he would liberate it by degrees. But hitherto he has shown not the least intention of doing so; nor perhaps could he do so with safety till he is prepared to abandon his present arbitrary style of ruling;—for, as Morny said, "ce gouvernement n'est pas discutable pendant vingt-quatre heures!" We must say a few words on this head.

Nothing can ever be predicated positively, without reserve, and without reference to the context of circumstances, of the value of any institution or the propriety of any measure. These must depend upon the suitability of such measure or institution to national character and national condition. The temperaments of peoples are as widely diverse as the temperaments of individuals; and a statesman who should act in disregard of the

one is as culpable, and likely to be as pernicious, as a physician who should prescribe without consideration of the other. Most especially to be taken into our estimate of the fitting political arrangements for this or that nation are the relative degrees of *excitability* in their constitution. No lawgiver who deserved or expected his work to be successful, or his name to live, would ordain similar administrative restraints, or an equal degree of unfettered individual action, for a phlegmatic as for a mercurial and susceptible race. The same liberty of speech and writing, the same freedom and facility for association, which could be safely and serviceably conceded to people slow and deliberate by nature, and inured for centuries to manage and restrain themselves, might obviously be perilous and noxious in the extreme if possessed by a nation of a singularly mobile and impressible organisation, who are destitute of that "inborn reverence for the constable's staff" which is so peculiarly Anglo-Saxon, and whose history for the last age has been a series of alternations between irrational submission to authority and irrational revolt against it. In this country we have always been accustomed, from the highest to the lowest, to meet and combine for recognised and lawful purposes; and, indeed, a considerable portion of our internal activity and municipal government is carried on through the medium of these voluntary or incumbent associations. But it by no means follows that a similar result would be secured by similar customs in a land where, the central power doing and having long done every thing, no legitimate field has been left for self-formed corporate organisations, and where consequently these have rarely existed except for purposes that could not be defended or avowed—as the "secret societies" of Ireland, Italy, and France. In like manner, we have always enjoyed the right of criticising and vituperating our rulers, as well as of changing them more or less completely on occasions; but the dullness of habitual possession, and a certain inert sobriety of temper, suffice to guard us against any outrageously flagrant abuse of these prerogatives. But who can say that this would be so with a people who are fierce, emotional, and combative, and whose antecedents have led them to regard their government either as a tyrant to be crouched to, or an enemy to be assailed, or a treasure-chamber to be seized?

Now undeniably the French are a very excitable people. They are at once quick, vehement, and volatile. Speeches and writings, harangues at the tribune, leading-articles in the newspapers, produce a very different effect upon them and upon us. We hear them or read them with interest indeed and attention, but rarely with much emotion, still more rarely with any lasting emotion. We listen to the orator who has been declaim-

ing earnestly against the corruption and incapacity of government; we lay down the journal in which we have been perusing a skilful and highly-wrought exposition of the unpardonable sins and shortcomings of our rulers; we talk the matter over with a friend; we decide upon our vote at the next election; we even, perhaps, think for a few moments whether we will not get up a petition, or call a public meeting;—and then we go quietly about our daily business; we never dream of proceeding, *par voie de fait*, to upset the peccant government at once. But it is very different across the Channel. The speeches are heard or the articles are read by all classes, are vehemently commented upon, and angrily discussed; each auditor and interlocutor communicates his own excitement to his neighbour; the multitude of individual emotions are, as it were, *clubbed together*, and make a sum-total truly formidable; in plain words, the glass of wine, or the pinch of snuff, which to us is a gentle exhilaration, gets into the head of our neighbours, and creates dangerous and disproportionate cerebral disturbance. Every foreigner who has attended the national assemblies, or heard the journals in times of interest read aloud in *cafés*, will confirm this statement;—you see men in knots, with fiery eyes and wild gesticulations, growing every moment more ungovernable; you see auditors and senators shaking their fists at one another (even at vis-à-vis they have never seen before) across the legislative chamber. Every Frenchman, of whatever party, will admit, more or less reluctantly, the accuracy of our picture; and it is curious that all parties in turn, from the most liberal to the most conservative, have drawn the same practical conclusion from it. All have felt, or deemed, that perfect freedom of the press, unrestrained journalism, was incompatible with public tranquillity or stable administration. Not only the government of Charles X. and the government of Louis Napoleon, but the ministry of Thiers and the ministry of Guizot introduced some restrictions, and licensed police interferences which on this side of the Channel we should consider strange and arbitrary indeed. And it was under the last republic that one of the most serious blows at the power and the daring of the periodical press was struck—whether a wise and warrantable one we need not here discuss—in the law which compelled the writers of newspaper-articles to affix their names. This will suffice to show what the impression of the French themselves is upon this subject. Few thoughtful men among them,—few who had not some special *bête noire* which they desired to overturn,—would, we believe, be found to advocate such complete license as prevails with us. None, we think, would be found to undertake the government of the country upon such terms. The amount and form of the

restrictions they would impose are the sole questions of difference among them. The present Emperor has carried these restrictions further than any of his predecessors; he has carried out the principle consistently, and has therefore obtained his aim effectually. Assuredly we are not prepared to defend him in this particular. We think he has endeavoured to crush a power which it would have been more patriotic to have sought to regulate. We think his interferences and "warnings" have often been arbitrary, unjust, needless, and petty. We are of opinion that by persisting so long without relaxation he has forfeited much of the justification or apology which might have been derived from the plea of exceptional and transient emergency. We have no doubt that the severity of his control over the journalism of France has saved the country from many mischiefs, and probably from much convulsion; but it is certain that this exemption has been dearly purchased,—by the people, because they have been subjected to much injustice, oppression, and misgovernment, which *dared* not have gone on under the vigilance of a free press,—by the government, because it has rushed into many blunders from which public discussion would have saved it.

One clear benefit, indeed, is traceable to the unrelenting strictness of the course the Emperor has pursued, which deserves more attention than it has received. To the effectual "gagging" of journalism we owe, beyond dispute, the maintenance of the cordial alliance between the two countries. With a perfectly free newspaper press in France we do not believe that alliance could have endured three months. In the first place, though the more enlightened portion of the nation has nearly discarded and outgrown the past, it is undeniable that some classes still retain their old traditional dislike and jealousy of England, and these feelings would have found utterance in the favourite organs of those classes. In the second place, some of the most widely circulated daily journals—one especially we have in our eye—are the property, or under the guidance of men whom personal motives or exaggerated nationality prompt to read backwards and to paint in the darkest colours every thing we say and do; who regard us much in the same way as do the Irish rebels, or the lowest American democracy; and whom nothing would delight so much as to baffle and embarrass us;—men to whom statesmanlike views are unknown, and who would be wholly unrestrained by any magnanimous or patriotic reticence. In the third place, Russia is far too sagacious not to have seen her account in seizing the weapons thus presented to her; she would have actually purchased some organs, and would have influenced others, and made them virtually her own by those astute and wily strata-

gems which she knows so well how to employ. All these anti-English journals would have been at work day after day, misrepresenting facts, inventing rumours, attributing designs, imagining affronts and slights, fanning into a flame every incipient misunderstanding, putting the worst construction upon every action. Where our army had succeeded better than the French, or our navy had outsailed theirs, unfair proceedings would have been audaciously insinuated; where we had comparatively failed, our blunders or mishaps would have been ungenerously magnified and sneered at. On the occasion of every victory, it would be hinted, or boldly affirmed, that we had taken more of the credit than of right belonged to us; every disaster would be attributed to our backwardness or incapacity. The English press in its turn would probably not be slow to resent and to retaliate; French boasts would be caricatured; French defeats and weaknesses would be exposed and denounced. The newspapers of both countries, filled with these unworthy recriminations, would have spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and would have been transmitted to the seat of war and perused eagerly in both camps; flame and fuel would have been at once supplied to all the worst and pettiest feelings that can rage in the human breast; every dormant jealousy would have been roused into exuberant life; every trivial and latent suspicion would have acquired stature and certainty; mutual cordiality would have given way to mutual distrust, and all hearty and effective co-operation would have become impossible. Even where two nations have long been friends, and are united by an intrinsic harmony of nature,—a free press, with its reckless spirit, its violent language, and its low necessities, makes it difficult enough to avoid quarrels, and to suffer old animosities to go to sleep. How much greater would be the danger in the case of allies so different in temperament and character as the English and the French, and where the friendly understanding and thorough good-fellowship and mutual confidence of the governments have not yet had time to percolate downwards to the core of the nations' heart!

The stern control which the government has exercised over the newspaper press in France has averted these evils, and rendered our cordial alliance possible, and prevented bad feeling from growing up between the two armies: in other words, it has prevented the reckless, passionate, and malignant spirits of the nation from undoing the beneficent work at which the wise and magnanimous on both sides of the Channel have laboured so incessantly. And when to this we add, that the same control hindered the French papers from repeating (and therefore the French public from knowing) the virulent attacks on Louis Napoleon with which at one time *our* papers abounded,—we shall

be obliged to confess that a vast and unquestionable good has resulted from those restrictive measures which at first sight seem so indefensible.

But, though disposed to admit that the severe restraint on newspaper freedom in France *may* have been justifiable and wise, we cannot extend these excuses to the interference of government with other and soberer organs of public opinion. The plea alleged for controlling discussion and declamation, addressed by the daily organs of the press to an excitable, a miscellaneous, and often an ignorant audience, does not apply to freedom of speech confined to such quarters as the benches of the *Académie Française* or the pages of the *Revue des deux Mondes*, where the audience addressed is comparatively select, of a higher rank, and composed mainly, if not exclusively, of the class of the educated and reflecting few. These voices of opinion might surely have been allowed to speak out with safety. Their criticisms on public affairs might, we can well conceive, prove mortifying and irritating to the powers that be; but it could scarcely be plausibly alleged that the utterance of them in those limited circles, and in that deliberate form, was really attended with danger to the national tranquillity. A calm and cutting sarcasm from Villemain, or a clear exposition of fallacious statesmanship from Guizot, uttered in the presence of the cultivated intelligence of the nation, ought, no doubt, to be more painful to erring or incapable ministers than a fierce denunciation in the columns of *La Presse* or *Le Constitutionnel*; but it cannot be urged that it is as likely to lead to popular tumult or to weaken administrative action. It is addressed *ad clerum*, and not *ad populum*. Therefore, while we may believe the restrictions on journalism to have been dictated by considerations for the public weal, it is difficult to believe that personal feeling and personal fears have not been the actuating motive of the recent assaults on the liberty of the *Académie*, and of the cautions to the *Revue des deux Mondes*.

L'Institut de France, which received its present form from the hands of the first Napoleon, though originally founded in 1795, consists of five sections, or *académies*, among which the Académie Française, founded by Richelieu for the encouragement of letters, holds the first rank. This académie has survived all the various changes of dynasty and constitution which have swept over France. It succumbed for a brief space under the reign of terror, but soon reared its head again above the deluge. It is the only national institution which every convulsion has left standing; and it preserved the forms, the traditions, and to a great degree the reality of liberty of speech and action, when these were suppressed and in danger of being forgotten every where else in France. It has, in fact, been a precious ark

for hiding and nursing the nucleus of freedom and public spirit amid the storms and inundations which have successively devastated that unquiet land. Composed for the most part of eminent publicists, orators, authors, and statesmen, its dignity and influence were so great that even arbitrary power shrank from a collision with it, or from wantonly incurring its condemnation. Under the Empire it alone retained something of actual independence and distinct and co-ordinate anthority. It filled up the vacancies in its own body by free election; it decreed prizes on open competition by its own unbiassed decision; it elected its own officers; and it admitted or excluded the public at its own pleasure to a participation in its more solemn and important ceremonies. One of the most interesting of these occasions was the reception of new members. It is customary for the neophyte to pronounce a eulogium on the deceased academician to whose vacant place he has succeeded, and for the president, or some other member of the body, to respond to him in a set oration. Naturally enough such of the public as could be admitted to the hall (never a very vast number) sought eagerly for places, which it rested with the academicians to assign. Of course this eagerness was much enhanced in those days when all other arenas of free speech were closed; and of course, too, in those days the speakers, silenced every where else, took advantage of this one place of security to say, though with a certain cautious and disguised severity, what might not be said elsewhere. The demand for places, and the intensity of the interest excited, were naturally proportionate to the stringency of the despotism which weighed upon all other utterances of opinion. Now, it is not to be denied that the academicians, since the *coup-d'état*, have employed the opportunity afforded by these accustomed orations to indulge in covert but pointed attacks upon the actual *régime* and the obnoxious individual at its head. This was especially the case at the last *receptions*, those of Berryer, M. de Sacy, and Montalembert.* It could scarcely, indeed, be otherwise, when we remember that the academy consists of the most noted politicians and ministers of former dynasties, whom the present *régime* has proscribed or reduced to inaction and obscurity. Nor can it be denied that all these masked assaults upon the existing government were received by the audience with undisguised delight and rapturous applause.

All this, no doubt, must have been galling enough to the men in power; but it could not be alleged that public tranquillity was endangered by these rare displays before so select and limited an

* As a specimen of the allusions we refer to, we may notice, that M. de Sacy spoke of the happy times of the Restoration as days "when we suffered little and had a right to complain much."

audience:—on the contrary, such a safety-valve was probably a most salutary one for the inevitable feelings of the proscribed classes; and a magnanimous monarch would have disregarded the discontent of rivals and the sarcasms of philosophers, while a prudent one would have hesitated to venture on a step which was certain to draw down upon him the blame of the cultivated and scientific men of all Europe, and which, with the exception, perhaps, of the confiscation of the Orleans property, is the only one of his proceedings which does not admit of even a plausible defence. Louis Napoleon, however, seems to have been of a different opinion. Smarting under the keen arrows of literary politicians, and resolute to crush every power in France at all capable of making head against himself, he, last April, was guilty of two assaults on the independence of the *Institut*. Under pretence of raising the number of members of one section (*Sciences morales et politiques*) to the same as the others (forty), and, it is alleged, with the direct view of influencing a coming election, and preventing the nomination of three obnoxious economists, Horace Say, Leonce de Lavergne, and Renouard, he swamped that section with ten of his own adherents, arbitrarily nominated by imperial decree. And, not content with this despotic proceeding, he further, by a stroke of his pen, transferred to commissions of academicians *to be nominated by the government* the right of adjudging prizes, and took from the Academies the power of appointing their own librarians and agents, and that of regulating the admission of the public to its *séances*,—vesting these powers in the hands of the Minister of Public Instruction! Of course the most grave and earnest remonstrances were immediately made; and after considerable discussion and delay, the government *virtually* rescinded the decree. But, in order to avoid the appearance of defeat, and, above all, the *publicity* of defeat which would have attended the issuing of a fresh decree (which must have been inserted in the *Moniteur*), the Minister of Public Instruction addressed a report to the Emperor, explaining or modifying away nearly all the objectionable points of the original decree, and communicated this report officially to the Institut.

It may be interesting here to give a few details relating to the periodical press of France,—details not generally known even in that country, and not at all known here.

The *Revue des deux Mondes* holds not only the first position among the eminent journals of France, but a wholly exceptional one. It is the only Review that has been able to *establish* itself, *i. e.* to maintain an independent and a lucrative existence; and even this single organ has only thus secured itself of late years. It appears every fortnight, giving to its readers a mass of matter, often exceedingly valuable, equal to a quarterly number of the

Edinburgh or *Quarterly Review*. It was set on foot in 1830, and is said from first to last to have sunk, or actually absorbed and lost, a capital of 20,000*l*., and to have half-ruined several of its successive proprietors or shareholders. Less than 6000 subscribers will not suffice to make such a review *pay* in France; and it was only in 1849 that the *Revue des deux Mondes* reached this number. Its several rivals have never been able to make head against it, though many have been tried and failed. The *Revue de Paris*, we understand, has a circulation of about 1300, of which not above 600 are regular and reliable subscribers. The *Revue Britannique*, which is merely a translation of the best articles in English reviews, prints 2000 copies. The *Revue Contemporaine*, a recent creation by M. Guizot and his friends, had a circulation of 1300, of which 700 were *abonnés*. This review has recently, it is believed, and, indeed, pretty well known, been purchased by the Emperor's government as their bi-monthly organ;* and we are assured, on authority which it is not easy for us to disregard, that considerable official influence has been brought to bear upon all writers in any way connected with the state, to induce them to desert the *Revue des deux Mondes* and concentrate their strength on the *Revue Contemporaine*.

The *Revue des deux Mondes* has never been the property nor the organ of any special government or party, though several have endeavoured to become possessed of it; among others, Carrel in 1834, Lamartine and afterwards Barrot in 1835, and Guizot in 1845. In this year it was reconstituted with a capital of 600,000 francs, and a fresh body of shareholders, of whom the most noted were Molé, Cousin, Broglie, Duvergier, and Thiers; and since that date it has steadily represented the views of the moderate and constitutional liberals. In 1836 it attached itself to the government of M. Thiers, and has never lost its connection with that statesman. In 1838, however, it supported the ministry of M. Molé, and earnestly combated the coalition. In 1846 and 1847, without being ostensibly allied with M. Guizot, it refused to join the opposition in the affair of the Spanish marriages, as in that of the reform banquets which gave occasion to the Revolution of February 1848. At that period it only counted 3000 *abonnés*; but the vigour and spirit which it manifested in defence of social order and sound political economy against the prevalent socialistic doctrines—a spirit principally due to the pens of Michel Chevalier and Léon Faucher—found such favour with the public, that its circulation speedily doubled. It shortly after-

* Purchased for—some say 25,000—some 20,000 fr. It now appears under the auspices of M. de la Guerronière, M. Baroche, M. Troplong, M. de Saint Beuve, and M. Mérimée.

wards added to its usual issue an annual volume of contemporary history; and by the time the empire was established it counted 7000 subscribers, and at present counts 9000. Its position is now effectually established; and much of its success is doubtless due to the tact and energy of its actual editor, M. Buloz.

Among the newspapers of Paris, there are some which may be said to represent certain principles and opinions, and others which are simply the organs of particular individuals. In the first class we may place the *Journal des Débats*, the *Siècle*, and the *Constitutionnel*; in the second, the *Presse*, which is the organ of M. de Girardin, and the *Gazette de France*, formerly the journal of M. de Genoude, now of M. de Lourdoueix. Among the representatives of opinion the *Journal des Débats* holds probably the first rank, though its subscribers scarcely exceed 9000. The tendencies of this paper, originally an adherent of the ancient monarchy, and *plus royaliste que le roi*, were gradually modified during the Restoration by M. de Chateaubriand, whose opposition had commenced, and who availed himself of the influence he possessed over the two *frères* Bertin (the proprietors) to impress his politics upon their journal. In truth, during the last years of the Restoration, this paper was the special organ of Chateaubriand; just as at a later period, under the government of July, it became the mouthpiece of Guizot, who exercised over the son the same influence that Chateaubriand exercised over the father. It is said, too, but we will not vouch for the saying, that the *Journal des Débats* was usually richly remunerated for its support. Bertin (*père*), its founder, was very exigent in the article of money; and M. de Chateaubriand had often to come to his assistance and furnish him with funds, in addition to the 10,000 francs per month which was paid to the journal in the form of a regular subsidy, and which was continued even under the ministry of M. Guizot. Indeed this journal has been a fertile source both of wealth and honours to all its conductors; places, rank, and public employment, have been showered upon them. One of the younger Bertins rose rapidly in influence, and the other in his military career. Michel Chevalier (academician and *conseiller d'état*), St. Marc Girardin (academician and *professeur à la faculté*), Lavalette (senator, &c.), Bourqueney (Minister Plenipotentiary at Vienna), and latterly M. de Sacy (academician and librarian *à la Mazarine*), all owe their rise mainly to their connection with this powerful journal. The last-named gentleman, just received at the *Académie Française*, is the only person who ever arrived at this signal honour in consideration of newspaper articles alone. The influence of the *Journal des Débats* has of late much diminished, but is still considerable in official, diplomatic, and liter-

ary circles. Its general character is that of an organ which does not exactly *support* all governments, but comes to a *compromise* with them; it is remarkable for pliancy and tact; it knows how to bend to the passing storm; *il sait vivre*, in short; and as its support or its neutrality is worth having, most parties are anxious to conciliate it. Both under the last republic and the present empire *on le ménageoit*, as the phrase is. It is, however, Orleanist—*centre-droit*—at heart,—if a journal can be said to have a heart.

As the *Journal des Débats* may be said to represent in politics and literature a certain middle-class aristocracy, so the *Constitutionnel* is the especial organ of the trading or shop-keeping class—the *épiciers*, as it is the fashion to denote them generically. It was established under the Restoration by MM. Etienne et Jay, and became the champion of liberal ideas, of which it usually took the narrowest and vulgarest view. During the monarchy of July it was generally the mouthpiece of M. Thiers, first in the hands of M. Boilay, and then in those of M. Véron, the author of the *Mémoires d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, who gives many curious details—how far always reliable we cannot say—regarding the history of this paper. M. Véron not long since parted with the journal to M. Mirès, a notorious stock-jobber and imperialist, who, we believe, still retains it. It has an enormous circulation, nearly 40,000; but its influence and authority are limited, as it is little read among the higher ranks, or in what is called "society."

The *Siècle* descends a step lower than the *Constitutionnel* to find readers. It is the journal of *cafés* and *cabarets*, as the *Constitutionnel* is that of *épiciers*. It is republican in politics (*nuance* Cavaignac) and Voltairian in religion; that is, it is vehemently antagonistic to legitimate monarchy, and treats of all sacred matters in a spirit of bitter animosity, especially by the pen of M. Labédollière; but it does not seem unwilling to support, or at least to tolerate, the imperial *régime*. Its circulation is very large, being variously stated between 30,000 and 50,000 *abonnés*.

L'Assemblée Nationale was started five years ago by MM. Guizot, Duchâtel, and Salvandy, to advocate the union of all partisans of both branches of the Bourbons; to be, in fact, the organ of *la fusion*. The *Journal des Débats* and the *Revue des deux Mondes*, being not independent and available enough for their purposes, they set on foot the *Assemblée* and the *Revue Contemporaine*. The former is edited by M. Mallac, *ancien chef de cabinet* under Duchâtel when Minister of the Interior. Guizot and Salvandy occasionally write in it anonymously, or rather pseudonymously; but it has never been able to obtain a circulation of more than 4000 or 5000.

L'Union is a journal in the interest of pure legitimacy, spurning all compromises, and caring little for the *fusion*. It succeeded *La Quotidienne;* but is little known, and has a very limited circulation.

La Presse was founded in 1836, and soon reached a circulation of 10,000. After various fluctuations, it printed in 1853 nearly 25,000 copies, and in 1855 (it says) 45,000. It is, in that case, the most widely-read newspaper in France. But it does not owe this distinction solely or chiefly to its politics. It is cheaper than any other, costing only three *sous;* it appears in the evening; and its *feuilleton* is usually of a superior and exciting character. At present the *Mémoires de George Sand* are appearing in its columns, and constitute one of its chief attractions. *La Presse* can scarcely be said to have any distinct or settled political opinions; it draws its inspiration from M. de Girardin, and follows all the vagaries of that extraordinary brain. Emile de Girardin is one of the most remarkable men in France. For twenty years he has been a prominent, enthusiastic, violent politician, preaching the wildest doctrines, leading the most inconsistent life. Advocating one day the most unlimited degree of liberty, if you can get it; advocating on the morrow the most unbounded despotism as the next best thing, if the other be unattainable; announcing as eternal and indisputable truths each shallow paradox that passes through his volatile mind; the *soi-disant* friend of the poor and the oppressed, while amassing thousands in virtue of his intimacy with the men in power; brave, speculative, undoubting, and audacious; unquestionably clever, but reckless, flighty, and unscrupulous, "*aussi roué que chimérique*," as was said by one who knew him well,—he is in our judgment about the most dangerous and mischievous man who ever wielded a public journal in any country. For a considerable time he was an energetic adherent of the present Emperor, as long as he could influence him, or fancied that he could. He is now the intimate friend and counsellor of Prince Napoleon, whose prime minister he will assuredly be, if for the misery of Europe and the disgrace of France that disreputable man should ever succeed his cousin on the throne; and then adieu to the *entente cordiale* between the two countries, for Girardin hates England as much as the vulgarest Frenchman of them all.

With the *Patrie*, a semi-official evening paper, of little weight, conducted by M. Delamare, and *L'Univers*, a religious organ, devoted to exciting the violent passions of the priests and the priest-ridden, and written with great eloquence by M. Veuillot—(having about 3000 *abonnés*)—we must close these details of the newspaper press of France. The official organ of government,

the *Moniteur*, we need not describe. Its circulation,—to a great extent a forced one—varies enormously.

To return from this digression. In forming our opinion of the condition of France, and of the character of the man who rules it, we must not forget the existence in that country of elements of danger and disorder which are not found, or are found only in a greatly modified and mitigated form, with us. The "dangerous classes" in the two countries differ considerably, both in their nature and their numbers. Here they consist of the squalid poor, the "Arabs of the streets," the regular malefactors and depredators,—thieves and burglars, to whom larceny is a calling and a profession, but not a creed. The prevalence of the former is a reproach to the wisdom, if not to the warmth, of our zealous charity; the strength and numbers of the latter are the greatest opprobrium of our administrative vigilance and skill. But though they prey upon the community, they do not make war against it. The criminal and the wretched trouble and disgrace society; they cannot be said to menace peace and order. They constitute an intestine malady, rather than a domestic foe. They have a social, but scarcely a political existence. In France it is otherwise. In addition to the numbers who live disreputably by their wits, by criminal practices and petty depredations, there are thousands of liberated gaol-birds and galley-slaves, often banded together in most formidable union, who detest every thing settled and respectable with the whole force of their malignant souls, to whom any government and *all* order is abhorrent, and who look upon society not as an oyster to be opened, or a mine to be *exploité*, but as an institution to be undermined and overthrown. Such men of course are ready tools for any political party which seeks to excite and profit by popular commotion; and that parties do exist in France unscrupulous enough to enlist such infamous allies experience has too often shown. Independently of these, who are malefactors in grain, are many thousands more who are not bad, but only violent and weak,—whom poverty, disappointment, ill-success, and ignorance, have prepared to listen eagerly to any theory which accounts flatteringly for their sufferings, and to any scheme which holds out a prospect of redress; who are easily misled by the sophistry, inflamed by the eloquence, and duped by the promises of demagogues, and who constitute, in fact, their victims and their armies. These are the Socialists of France,—men scattered over all the land, in the provinces and the rural districts as well as in the metropolis and the other large towns,—not professionally criminals, but facile to bend and stimulate to the most enormous atrocities of outrage and of plunder; and the more perilous to the commu-

nity because fanatical as well as criminal, and able in a manner to gloss over their passions of greed, of vengeance, and of envy with the glistening varnish of a political crusade. It suits the views of the Orleanists and the Republicans to question the numbers and prevalence of this formidable sect; but we cannot share their doubts. We have heard too much from men of all political predilections and of no political predilections to feel any hesitation in regarding the numbers, the fanaticism, the organisation, and the occasional brutality of the socialists as one of the greatest internal dangers against which the authorities of France have to guard; and the intense gratitude expressed by all classes of possessors to Louis Napoleon, when the peril was recent and their fears were fresh, for showing a vigour and resolution which would always insure victory to the side of property and order, was proof enough of the reality, or at least of the general conviction, of the formidable nature of the menacing danger. And when to all this we add, what we fear cannot be denied, the existence of a widespread jealousy and bitter animosity on the part of the working classes against their richer and more fortunate brethren,—against those who *are* above them in the social scale, but whom they fancy *have no right* to be so,—and moreover, the prevalence among political factions of an excess of fierce and unscrupulous party-spirit, which values victory so much, and principle and patriotism so little, that few would hesitate to employ any tools or to bargain with any agitators for the sake of recovering their lost ascendency;—when we embrace all these considerations in a panoramic view of France, we shall feel more disposed than perhaps we hitherto have been to make vast allowances for the most unbending rigidities of power, even where apparently excessive and superfluous, and to admit that despotism may conscientiously believe itself to be patriotism, if it would but regard itself as only temporary, transitional, and the regretable means to a better end. We are not always just to our neighbours, from ignoring or losing sight of normal differences between the social position of the two nations. In England neither liberty nor order are ever really endangered; the government is always stronger than the insurgent masses; the police is always an enormous overmatch for the malefactors; the friends of order are out of all proportion more powerful, more united, and more courageous than the disorderly and turbulent. In France this is far from being the case. Over and over again have governments and dynasties been upset by a hasty and improvised *émeute;* more than once have the lowest classes got the upper hand; more than once has the organised strife of parliamentary parties degenerated into a sanguinary conflict of savages in the open streets; and in June 1848, when the grand struggle between

socialism and society was fought out, for three fearful days did victory tremble undecided in the balance. If we had seen such a fight in our metropolis, and won so doubtful a conquest, how long would the recollection have made us tolerant of even the whims and the blunders of a dictatorship?

The feature in the Emperor's course, however, upon which it is impossible to look without suspicion and disapproval is this,—that it presents no sign of regarding its arbitrary sternness as exceptional and transient, no appearance of approaching enlargement or mitigation. The municipal element in the provinces has not been encouraged nor set free,—on the contrary, it has been snubbed and crushed; the abrupt interferences of centralisation have not been diminished or abandoned; the *forms* of constitutionalism contained in the new system have not yet been endowed with real life; the action of the *corps législatif* has not been emancipated; books, indeed, are published without *nominal* control, but the severe restrictions originally established on public discussion in the higher organs of the press have not been relaxed. This absence of any *incipient* moves in a right direction looks ill: it makes the defence of Louis Napoleon difficult to his English admirers; it will prevent the more sober lovers of liberty in France from rallying round his government. It keeps up the conviction in the minds of patriots that so hard a dynasty *ought not* to last, and in the minds of politicians that it *cannot* last;—both therefore stand aloof, and reserve themselves for more genial and hopeful days.

The sentiments of the French people in reference to the war it is not easy to discover with certainty, where the utterance of extreme differences is so rigidly repressed. But it seems neither popular with, nor interesting to any large or influential class. The army has never been very enthusiastic for it, because, though much glory has been won, the bloodshed has been terrible and the hardships excessive. There has been much suffering and little *fun;* and vast numbers both of men and officers, while lying in the trenches before Sebastopol in the inclemency of last winter, were sighing audibly for the amusements and luxuries of Paris. A large part of the army, moreover, was Orleanist in its sympathies, and murmured at the absence of its favourite and famous generals. The commercial and moneyed classes naturally looked with uneasiness on a contest involving such an enormous expenditure, threatening monetary difficulties, and promising an increase of taxation in the distance. The peasantry felt the conscription severely; in many districts it operated as a most oppressive and inconvenient drain: the nature and objects of the war were little understood, and its victories only faintly echoed in the provinces. The whole features, too, of the contest per-

plexed their untrained minds,—ignorant of the present, and filled with traditions of the past. A war against England or Prussia, a war for Belgium or the Rhine, a war on their own frontier, they would have comprehended and been interested in; but a war 3000 miles off, a war to preserve Turkey, and above all, a war with the English as allies and comrades, presented an *ensemble* utterly bewildering to their understanding;—they could make nothing of it, and they saw their children go to swell the number of its victims without enthusiasm and without hope. The success of the LOANS was no indication whatever of the popularity of the war, though it has often been represented in that light. Every one who had any little hoard to lend hastened to offer it to the Emperor, not in the least because he approved of the purposes to which it was to be applied, not even because he had any decided confidence in the stability of his dynasty,—but simply because a liberal interest was offered, because in France it is singularly difficult to find lucrative investment for small sums—the high price of land yielding scarce any interest at all; and because it was held for certain that no future government would ever dream of repudiating a debt deliberately and formally contracted by its predeccssor, or tampering with the national credit. We entertain no doubt that the Comte de Chambord or the Comte de Paris, if either succeeded to the throne to-morrow, might borrow fifty millions in the same way and on the same terms;—if, indeed, the loans already contracted have not, as some begin to suspect, exhausted the hoardings and spare capital of France.

We confess that our wish is for the *present* continuance, at least, of the actual *régime* in France; and that wish would be still stronger did we see in the head of the government any indications—for the disposition to which we at one time gave him credit—to abate of the narrow sternness of his rule as he felt his country more settled and his seat more secure, and to admit into his constitution that expansion and life of which it is susceptible. Had he kept his despotic proceedings within the limits of the indispensable, and manifested an anxiety or a willingness to give even small, gradual, and *tentative* powers of self-government to the people as they seemed likely to use them wisely and with moderation, we should have had better hopes and warmer wishes for his permanence than we can now profess. We will not be rash enough to venture on any thing like a prediction. On one account we desire the duration of Louis Napoleon's reign: we incline to think that it affords the best security for the maintenance of the Anglo-French alliance, and we hold that alliance to be the surest guarantee for progress, peace,

and civilisation. It may seem strange that a cordial friendship between the two nations should be most safe and most firmly cemented under the heir of France's most warlike monarch and England's most unrelenting enemy; but such we believe to be the case. We have had ample experience how precarious was that alliance under other dynasties; we can well understand that ministries and governments dependent on popular favour must be easily swayed to war and evil by the gusts of popular jealousy and passion, and that only a strong government can afford to be wise and conscientious; we conceive Louis Napoleon to be far too sagacious not to perceive that his own interests and those of France equally dictate the most faithful and resolute adherence to a union which has already done so much for both; we think that his views have grown far soberer and wider since he had to deal with the grand realities of empire; and we are satisfied that he values the political *character* and moral rank he has attained by his honourable and straightforward conduct towards this country, and by the brilliant reception which it won for him last spring, far too much to risk it by any deviation from his recent course. As to one thing the testimony of every British statesman is consentaneous and unhesitating: that the diplomatic intercourse of the Emperor has throughout been frank and loyal in the extreme, and that they cannot say as much for any minister who ever previously managed the foreign policy of France.

It may be expected that we should say something as to the prospects of duration of the imperial dynasty in France. Even if we had any decided opinions on the matter, however, we should hesitate to express them; for to speak positively of the probable course of events is rarely seemly, and would be especially rash in the case of any foreign country; how much more in the case of a land where the "chapter of accidents" is always so rich as it is in France! All we can venture to do is to state a few of the considerations *pro* and *con*, gathered from the much we have heard, and the little we have been able to observe. On the one hand, people still repeat, as they have done for four years, *que cela ne durera pas;* but they repeat it with a less air of conviction, and more as if it were a wish than a belief. Then some symptoms of opposition have begun to appear from time to time, in the Corps Législatif, in the Académie, and in the Collège, as during the lectures of Saint Beuve; though they have not come to any serious demonstrations. Still, as we heard remarked by one observer, though few distinct facts can be alleged to indicate that the house is in danger of falling, the chinks are wider and more perceptible. Then, again, the dread of the *Rouges*, which

was for long one of the greatest sources of his power, is dying away, more in consequence of the length of time which has elapsed without any fresh indication of their activity, than from any rational ground for believing that they have ceased to be dangerous. Three causes especially have increased the alienation of the upper classes from Louis Napoleon, and go far to warrant the deep hatred felt towards him by the educated and self-respecting of all the old parties. One is the minute and omnipresent interference by which he has reduced to insignificance men and families who formerly had much local and provincial influence. A second is his alleged meddling with the regular course of both civil and criminal justice; an allegation which we fear cannot be wholly denied, and to which the dependence of the judges upon his good pleasure gives a *primâ facie* support. But what has most of all roused against his government the bitter animosity both of the *haute société* and of the real respectability and integrity of France, is the affluent display of the *parvenus* about the court, coupled with the notoriety of the low arts by which their wealth has been acquired. Scarcely any of the ministers, or men connected with the Emperor, are free from the reproach of stock-jobbing; their fortunes have been made, either by gross favouritism, or by speculations in the funds, which, in men placed as they are, and with sinister and secret means of information, is little short of swindling; and the riches thus questionably won are spent in a style of lavish and somewhat vulgar luxury, peculiarly offensive both to the taste and the poverty of the cultivated and the noble.

The character and conduct of his cousin and heir-presumptive are also a source of considerable embarrassment and of some danger to the Emperor. Plon-Plon, as he is usually called, is a man of low tastes and dangerous tendencies; clever enough, but utterly without principle or reputation; and he is so universally hated and despised (except by the republicans, who hope to use him), that the idea of his succeeding to the imperial throne is absolutely insupportable. He heads, moreover, a sort of subterranean and intriguing opposition to Louis Napoleon, who dare not leave him behind him in Paris, and yet cannot succeed in removing him for any time. Add to these causes for an unfavourable prognostication the uneasiness excited by the enormous expenditure of the Emperor's government, and the chances of disasters, or an inglorious termination to the war (which might at once be fatal); and we have elements enough to form a gloomy and uncertain future.

On the other hand, a succession of brilliant victories, crowned by a profitable and honourable peace, would do much to consolidate the Emperor's power, by gratifying both the army and

the nation. Indeed, many among that section of politicians in France who approve of the war-policy of Louis Napoleon almost dread his success for this very reason. Then, again, habit is gradually accustoming the people to his rule: the neck is fitting to the yoke. The *bourgeoisie* fancy that, war once ended, his strong repressive arm, by insuring order and tranquillity, will promote that material prosperity which is the very god of their idolatry; the peasantry are still his adherents, as much from ignorance as from enthusiasm; the *ouvriers* will be on his side as long as he can manage to find them constant and lucrative employment; and the priests will stand zealously by him as long as they can secure his support to their order. These are powerful allies; and the numbers of his agents, tools, and adherents scattered through the country will fight vigorously and labour hard to avert a catastrophe which they would share. But his principal reliance must ever be, as it ever has been, on his own character and talents. These have never been justly estimated: it was the fashion to underrate him formerly; it is the fashion to overrate him now. Personally we have had no means of judging, though we have gazed with intensest scrutiny on that hard, mean, sinister, impassive countenance, without one noble lineament or one genial expression; but we have had opportunities of ascertaining the judgments of several who have known him intimately and watched him long; and their opinions are neither doubtful nor discrepant. His forte lies in *meditative habits and a strong volition.* He has no genius; his education has been imperfect, and his knowledge is not great. His views are usually narrow, but sometimes singularly sagacious; and when he is on the right tack, his courage, coolness, deliberation, and unscrupulous resolution, give him enormous advantages. He seldom sees more than one thing at a time, and he never sees both sides of a question; but often gets hold of the right one, and then clings to it with bull-dog tenacity. Here, however, we must note a singularity which seems inconsistent with this feature in his character. He is tenacious, resolute, and vehemently imperious in carrying out *the purpose of the hour*,—but this purpose often changes. One project or fancy succeeds another with strange and almost infantine rapidity. Hence, though any thing but *vacillating*, he is very *changeable.* He learns little from others; for he rarely listens to reasoning or exposition, though he is silent with an appearance of attention, while in reality he is thinking, not hearing; but whatever he can get at by reflection continuous and profound, whatever he can think out for himself by the patient elaboration of his own mind, that he will arrive at and make his own. In one point he is singularly at fault. He has slight insight into cha-

racter, and is apt to choose his men ill. In this he is a striking contrast to his uncle, of whom Chateaubriand said, "*C'est un bien grand découvreur d'hommes.*" His field of selection, to be sure, is deplorably limited by the alienation from him of all the notabilities of France; but he has been unfortunate or unskilful in nearly all the chief appointments he has made. If his natural capacity were greater, he would be a far safer man, and his course far more predictable. He has made the most of the faculties with which he was originally endowed; but these were both limited in range and incomplete in number, and it is impossible to say when they will fail him, or whither they may lead him. He is shrewd rather than sound; being, in fact, one of what the French call "special" men; he is an *extraordinary* man, in the sense of being *unusual* rather than being wonderful; he *differs* from other men far more than he *surpasses* them. It is impossible, therefore, to feel confident or at ease in reference either to his proceedings or his fate.

Art. VI.—PHŒNICIA.

Phœnicia. By John Kenrick, M.A. London, B. Fellowes. 1855.

It sounds paradoxical, but it is nevertheless perfectly true, that the further we recede from any given section in the wide field of the past—provided we still possess sources of information respecting it, and these continue to be diligently and critically used—the more qualified we often become to understand it; the clearer the light we can throw on its obscurities; and the more sense we are able to extract out of statements which once baffled us as hopeless enigmas. No page in the great book of human history, which has any thing legible written on it, is turned over finally and for ever. Though again and again recurred to, it continues to yield fresh knowledge, proportionate to the intellectual resources of the mind which consults it. The reason of modern times is more sagacious and more exact in the interpretation of evidence than that of antiquity; and the critical faculty, from longer exercise, has acquired a more exquisite tact. Those contrasts and parallels which are indispensable to a distinct apprehension of the true import of any group of circumstances, are supplied in richer abundance from the wide and varied experience of former ages on which we can now look back; and the laws of social combination which have been deduced from a more extensive survey of social phenomena, place a new instrument of discovery in the hands of the philosophic inquirer, enabling him many times from

mere fragmentary indications to reconstruct an ancient fact—to infer, for example, the latent presence of an institution from the clear traces of effects which are known always to accompany it, or *vice versâ* to assume the effects from a passing notice of the institution. Direct and contemporary witnesses of past events possess of course a peculiar value; but they must be subjected to the cross-examining of a critical judgment not less than circumstantial evidence; and the latter may at times exist in such abundance, come from so many sources, and be stamped with so authentic a character, as almost to compensate the absence of the former.

In the whole compass of antiquity there is no people of whose interior life and social economy it would be more interesting to obtain a view, than the Phœnicians. The effect of their energy and enterprise on the future condition of the world is still perceptible. They first of the civilised people of the East applied a stimulus to the dormant susceptibilities of Hellenic culture, and furnished the conditions of its independent growth and rapid self-development. In their daring navigation and wide-extended commerce, in the resources and activity of their manufacturing industry, in the wealth and intelligence and political ascendency of their great mercantile aristocracy, they present many similitudes and suggest many affinities of the deepest interest to the form of society which exists among ourselves, and which is distinguished so broadly in the most striking of its features from the intervening civilisation of the Greeks and Romans. Egypt, Northern India and Ariana, from the vast antiquity into which their traditions run back, the impenetrable obscurity which invests the commencement of their social existence, and the monuments of dateless origin on which they have recorded the awakening consciousness of their nationality, carry with them an impression of the wonderful and mysterious which more powerfully affects the imagination; but they seem to belong to a primeval world with which we have no longer any concern; all that yet subsists of their wisdom and their industry does not come so *home* to us, does not stand in so intimate a relation to the still-enduring interests of our race, as the arts, the voyages, and the policy of the merchant-princes who anticipated by more than two thousand years, in the confederation of free cities which they founded at the foot of Lebanon, the commercial republics of Venice, Pisa, Genoa and Holland in the Christian period and the western world.

Of this remarkable nation we possess no native monuments, or next to none, to illustrate its origin and history. For our principal information we are indebted to the Greeks—Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo—and to the Latins, Pomponius Mela and Justin, who have followed in their track. These wri-

ters not only record what they saw or learned in their own age, but transmit a great deal of knowledge derived from earlier sources no longer accessible to us; and their more direct and ample statements are confirmed or qualified by the incidental notices scattered up and down the remains of classical literature—of the character and doings of a people which had left the traces of its existence on every promontory and island of the western seas.

In the middle of the fifth century before Christ, that indefatigable traveller, Herodotus, sailed from Egypt to Tyre, to visit some temples of Melcarth, or Hercules, there, and compare the traditions of their priests respecting the god, with those he had collected from other sources.* His visit was evidently a hurried one. Of what he then saw in Tyre, he has described nothing but two pillars—one of fine gold, the other of smaragdus brilliantly luminous by night (probably green glass with a lamp burning in the interior), which he found set up in one of the temples. In pursuit of his specific object he soon hastened away to Thasus, where another temple of Hercules had excited his curiosity. We cannot but regret that it did not come within his plan to remain longer in Tyre, where his keen eye and graphic pen could not have failed to preserve for us some invaluable pictures of the industrial life of antiquity. Had he favoured us with only a few such glimpses as he has opened into the interior of society at Babylon—setting before our eyes the dress and habitudes of its citizens; its marriage-law and sanitary regulations; the blended pride and shame which restrained ladies of rank from mingling with the crowd of vulgar votaries, as they went, shut up in their close carriages and followed by a long retinue of servants, to render their obligatory dues at the temple of the impure Mylitta,—our obligations to him would have been unspeakable.† Next to the Greek historians and geographers, the Hebrew Scriptures yield us the most abundant information respecting the Phœnicians, not only in the historical books, where the relations of Tyre with the kingdoms of Israel and Judah come under notice, but still more in the prophets, especially Isaiah and Ezekiel. The latter prophet has left us a more full and particular account of the Tyrian commerce than any other writer of antiquity.‡ And though this mention of Phœnicia in the Old Testament is only occasional, it has the recommendation of coming direct from contemporaries, and possesses in consequence a peculiar weight and interest. The Phœnicians must, however, have had origin-

* Herod. ii. 44.

† Herod. i. 199. *Οὐκ ἀξιεύμεναι ἀναμίσγεσθαι τῇσι ἄλλῃσι, οἷα πλούτῳ ὑπερφερεύσαι, ἐπὶ ζευγέων ἐν καμάρῃσι ἐλάσασαι.*

‡ Ezekiel xxvii.

ally histories of their own. Like other ancient nations of the eastern world, they had, no doubt, their state-archives, confided to the keeping of the priesthood, in which all events of importance were recorded. Out of materials derived from these sources two Greek writers, Dius, and Menander of Ephesus or Pergamus,* had framed complete histories of Tyre. Unfortunately their works have perished, with the exception of some fragments, exceedingly valuable as far as they go, which have been preserved by Josephus.† There is yet another source of information respecting Phœnicia, claiming to be native, which is still extant, and of very singular character.

About the commencement of the second century of our era, when the decay of old faiths and the thickening strife of Christianity with heathenism turned men's thoughts to the foundations of religious belief, and gave a new interest to the doctrines of the ancient priesthoods—a native of Phœnicia, Philo of Byblus, translated, as he affirmed, out of Punic into Greek, and from records kept in the temples, a work which bore the name of Sanchoniatho, an ancient sage or philosopher, who was described as having lived only a little later than Moses. Porphyry and Eusebius, who have each quoted largely from Philo Byblius, though with a different purpose, speak of the original work as a *history* of Phœnicia. If it were so, one cannot but wish that any other portion of it had been rescued from oblivion, than the cosmogonical dreams which it was anciently the custom to prefix to all national histories. In spite of circumstances calculated at first view to raise suspicion, there are some internal marks of substantial authenticity in this curious old fragment. The doctrines which it contains appear to have been issued, in perfect accordance with the corporate spirit of the ancient priesthoods, under the name and sanction of the religious body who had charge of the public records. Sanchoniatho was probably not the name of an individual, but the title, like our 'Doctor' or 'Reverend' (it has been interpreted 'Friend of Truth'), of an entire class. In the priestly legends it was usually contrived to confer a peculiar honour and antiquity on the city and temple which immediately furnished them: and we find accordingly a divine origin, and a priority of foundation to all other Phœnician cities, assigned in these relics of Sanchoniatho to Byblus. Again, it seems implied by the language in one passage that the doctrines were derived from the interpretation of symbolical figures, depicted on the walls of the temple, and explained by the hierophant.‡ This, we

* See Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology.

† Contra Apion.

‡ See the account of Kronos and Dagon, and of the son of Thabion — *πρώτου τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος γεγονότων Φοινίκων ἱεροφάντου* — in Cory's Ancient Fragments, pp. 14, 15, first edition.

know, was a customary mode of instruction in the temples of India, Egypt, and Babylon. The references to Jewish and Greek theology, indicative of a comparatively modern date, are easily accounted for by the readiness of the old priesthoods, like the Chinese of more recent times, when made acquainted with the ideas of other nations, so to modify their traditional system as to claim for it superior antiquity, and a priority in all knowledge. There can be little doubt, we suppose, that the Hermetic lore of Egypt has been continually modified in this way by the indirect action of Greek science and philosophy.*

Lastly, as evidence of their extensive colonisation, and in some degree illustrative of their manners and customs, the monuments of the Phœnicians bearing inscriptions, which have been found at intervals along the coast of the Mediterranean, especially in Malta, and which have been illustrated with great learning by the late eminent Semitic Orientalist, Gesenius, have opened a new source of knowledge within the present century.† In Phœnicia itself, so far as we know, not any native inscription or monument has yet been found.‡ What yet is concealed under the soil, and might be brought to light by applying that process of subterranean research which modern archæology has used with so much success in other parts of the earth, future years will perhaps discover. Nothing seems inaccessible to the perseverance and sagacity of our present *savans;* nor can there be a stronger proof of the scientific spirit of our age, than the conversion of the mouldering relics of the tomb into the elements of an exact and classified knowledge, marked by distinct indications of date and origin—the evocation of the dead, to instruct the living, and throw back the lurid light of their opened sepulchres on what seemed the impenetrable darkness of ages long past away.§

* Goguet (Origine des Loix, &c.) has given, in an appendix to his first volume, a summary of the arguments in favour of these Fragments, though on grounds different from those taken in the text. Mr. Kenrick, who in an earlier work (Egypt of Herodotus, note on the Cabiri, p. 266) had treated Sanchoniatho "as the assumed name of Philo of Byblus," in the present volume on Phœnicia, admits as probable the existence of a Punic original, containing ancient doctrines, which Philo translated, though not possessing the antiquity (at least in its actual form) affirmed by Eusebius and others. The negative view of this question is strongly maintained by the writer of the article Sanchoniatho in Smith's Dictionary of Biography, who cites Movers as on the same side.

† Swinton, a century ago, made use of Phœnician coins for historical purposes; but he had access to few monuments; and palæography was then comparatively in its infancy.

‡ Since writing this, we have learned that a sarcophagus of a king of the Sidonians, with a Phœnician inscription containing allusion to temples of Baal and Ashtaroth, was found at Sidon in January 1855. An account of this discovery was given to the Royal Society of Literature, November 14, 1855.

§ There is some rhetoric, but also some truth, in the following observations of a living writer:

"Tous les siècles, tous les peuples sont cachés dans la terre. Le sol m'a toujours

Such, then, are the materials which exist at present for recovering the history and elucidating the civilisation of one of the most remarkable peoples of antiquity. In the volume before us they have been worked up by Mr. Kenrick with the mature scholarship and ripened judgment of a long life devoted uninterruptedly to historical and philological pursuits. He has given us, in fact, a most thorough and complete critical *résumé* of all that can as yet be known about the Phœnicians; and he has placed within reach of the English reader, from the advanced point of view of modern learning, another very valuable contribution to the exact knowledge of ancient history, which he had already enriched by his two volumes on Egypt under the Pharaohs, and by his admirable and philosophical essay on Primeval History. In the distribution of his matter Mr. Kenrick has followed very much the same order in the present work as in the earlier one on Egypt. He has treated, first, of the geography, climate, and productions of Phœnicia; then discussed the origin of the nation, and the dispersion of its colonies; next considered its language, commerce, navigation, arts, manufactures, form of government, and religion; and in the concluding chapters recited its history from the earliest records till the final subjection of the country at the beginning of the sixteenth century to Ottoman rule. In this wide range of inquiry Mr. Kenrick has had the field more entirely to himself than in his earlier work on Egypt. Since Swinton furnished his chapters on the Semitic nations to the Ancient Universal History—now a century ago—we are not aware that any English scholar, if we except some occasional disquisition in the third volume of Sir W. Drummond's *Origines*, has directed any original study to the subject of Phœnician history and antiquities. It has been otherwise abroad. In the early part of the seventeenth century, Samuel Bochart, one of those giants of learning who formed then the strength and glory of the French Protestant Church, brought to bear on it an enormous amount of classical and oriental erudition, derived from every source of information which the existing state of literature supplied. "The most diligent reader of ancient authors, with a view to the illustration of Phœnician history, will find himself," says Mr. Kenrick, "anticipated or surpassed by Bochart." (preface, vi.) Etienne Morin's account of the origin of his great

paru le plus complet, le plus vrai des livres. Je l'ai appelé ailleurs 'un volume de six mille ans,' dont chaque siècle a écrit une page avec de la cendre et de la poussière. Il n'y a qu'à souffler sur cette poussière, et elle se ranimera au contact de la vie, comme les morts à la voix d'Élisée. . . . Et puis quel a donc été le rédacteur de ce livre antique, écrit avec des ossemens et avec des ruines? L'écrivain, c'est la mort qui ne mort jamais, et qui de sa main de fer a dépouillé impitoyablement tout ce qu'il y avait de faux chez l'homme, pour ne laisser plus subsister que le vrai."—*La Normandie Souterraine*, par l'Abbé Cochet.

work, the *Geographia Sacra*, well illustrates the man and his age.* Bochart was the pastor of a Huguenot church at Caen in Normandy, at that time, when the French provinces were still half-independent principalities, a distinguished seat of letters, where many learned men resided, and where the Protestants were numerous and powerful. Among his audience were doubtless some of the most highly educated men of the time. With the scrupulous reverence for Scripture which distinguished the early Protestants, Bochart, in the exercise of his ministerial duties—"ut nihil e cathedrâ proferret quod verissimum et compertissimum non esset"—commenced a minute and elaborate exposition of the book of Genesis, which proceeded slowly but continuously till he arrived at the genealogical perplexities of the tenth chapter. Here the descending stream of his erudition was arrested by an obstacle of doubt and difficulty, which formed a nucleus of accumulation, and gathered round it that huge mass of multifarious knowledge which subsists to this day in the *Phaleg* and *Canaan*. How the scriptural instruction of the congregation fared while this collateral inquiry was being prosecuted, we are not informed; but the fact shows with what conscientious diligence all Scripture difficulties were then encountered, and what immense erudition was applied to their solution. A younger contemporary of Bochart's, who had acquired from him a taste for oriental learning, the celebrated Huet, afterwards bishop of Avranches, was probably induced by the example of his profounder master, to direct his attention to kindred studies; and these produced as their result his two treatises, *De Navigationibus Salomonis*, and the *Histoire du Commerce des Anciens*.† Since that time, be-

* "De clarissimo Bocharto et omnibus ejus scriptis," prefixed to the folio edition of the "Geographia Sacra," Leyden, 1707, p. 4. It is in the second part of this work, entitled "Canaan," that the account of the Phœnician language and colonies is chiefly contained.

† The mutual relations of these remarkable men, perhaps the most eminent representatives of the two great religious parties between which France was at that time more equally divided than at present, are singular and affecting. Huet was the son of an ex-Calvinist. Notwithstanding their difference of faith, he had attached himself early in life to Bochart, who was the most learned man in that part of France. Huet accompanied Bochart on his visit to Christina, queen of Sweden, and has left a very amusing poetical account of their journey in his *Iter Suecicum*. A coldness afterwards ensued between them, in consequence of Bochart's charging Huet with a wilful mutilation of the text in his edition of the Commentaries of Origen. They were never friends again; and this alienation was increased by the growing bitterness of religious differences. Bochart's death appears to have been caused immediately by the intensity of an argument between them. In a session of the Academy of Caen, during a vehement dispute respecting the authenticity of some Spanish medals, Bochart was overtaken by a sudden seizure which soon terminated his life. Huet was admitted by his own friends to be exceedingly passionate in disputation. The event seems to have dwelt on his mind; for in a letter written to his nephew, Piedouë de Chersigné in 1712, more than forty years afterwards, he alludes to it: "La mort de M. Bochart ne luy fut causée par notre dispute, sinon en partie. Il estoit déjà attaqué d'un mal

sides monographs communicated to the learned societies of France and Germany, Heeren has devoted a part of his book on the *Trade and Commerce of the Ancient Nations* to Phœnicia; and Movers, a professor at Breslau, is now completing a work in three parts on the same subject—*Das Phönizische Alterthum.* To all these writers Mr. Kenrick acknowledges his obligations; but he comes into the field as an independent inquirer, criticising their statements from the resources of a learning at once extensive and accurate, and with the clear verdict of a firm and self-relying judgment.

Owing to the obscurity which hangs over the origin of nations, and the uncertainty attaching to mythic interpretation—perhaps also from natural reaction against the too great readiness of older scholars to accept as fact only partially enveloped and disguised, the fabulous narrations of ancient poets and historians, there has been a disposition of late years in some quarters to dispute, or at least to ignore, the alleged filiation of different civilisations, and to treat them in their respective localities as *autochthonous.* On this subject Mr. Kenrick adopts a middle theory. He does not, as was formerly the fashion, *pragmatise* mythology, *i. e.* simply drop the supernatural elements, and take the residuum as history; nor, on the other hand, reject it altogether, as utterly useless for historical purposes; but having endeavoured to catch the traditional belief, the impregnating idea which is at work under the ever-changing forms of fable, he uses it with cautious sagacity as a clue for tracing the course of primeval settlements, and recovering the lost thread of ethnological affinities. Against Movers, for instance, and other writers, he defends and accepts Herodotus's statement of the original migration of the Phœnicians from the head of the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Mediterranean; and in opposition to the view of the late Ottfried Müller, he thinks we may still discern through the many-tinted cloud of fable no obscure indication of the influence of Phœnician colonies on the earliest civilisation of Greece. In reference to Herodotus's account of the origin of the Phœnicians,

dangereux, dont les accès le mettoient en péril, et un de ces accès luy fut causé par l'émotion de la dispute et l'emporta." (*Correspondance inédite.*) Moysant de Brieux, one of the many learned men then living at Caen, and the founder of the Academy, wrote these lines on the death of Bochart:

> "Scilicet hic cuique est data sors æquissima, talis
> Ut sit mors, qualis vita peracta fuit.
> Musarum in gremio teneris qui vixit ab annis,
> Musarum in gremio debuit ille mori."

Huet, Evêque d'Avranches, &c., avec des extraits de documents inédits, par M. de Gournay, in the *Mémoires de l'Académie de Caen,* 1855.

It is singular that Morin, in describing the circumstances of Bochart's death (p. 35), never once alludes to the dispute between him and Huet in the Academy.

which that writer says he received from themselves, Mr. Kenrick remarks:

"The 'sea called Erythra,' in Herodotus, has a wide extension, including the Indian Ocean and its two gulfs, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, which latter, however, he does not appear to have considered as a gulf, but as a part of a continuous sea-line; but when he means specifically the Red Sea, he calls it by the name of the Arabian Gulf. The south of Palestine would be the route naturally taken by emigrants from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Mediterranean, and the valley of the Jordan would conduct them thence across the plain of Esdraelon to Phœnicia. From Petra to Jericho was only three or four days' journey; and from Petra to Gerrha on the Persian Gulf was a well-known route of traffic, which in earlier ages would be a natural course of emigration. It is remarkable, that not fewer than three places were found on the Persian Gulf bearing similar, if not identical, names with those of Phœnicia—Tyrus or Tylus, Aradus, and Dora, in which were temples resembling in architecture those of Phœnicia, and the inhabitants of which claimed the Phœnicians of Palestine for their colonists. If the resemblance of name do not prove this, it shows at least a similarity of language presumptive of an affinity between the inhabitants of these two regions. The threefold character under which the Phœnicians appear to us in their earliest history—navigators, merchants, and pirates—has always belonged to the natives of the Arabian peninsula; and these attributes were united in no other nation of equal antiquity. The Babylonians were not familiar with the sea, and the Egyptians abhorred it. The Phœnicians were never more than settlers on the coast of Syria, without roots in the interior; as they began, so they ended."

By this last observation Mr. Kenrick does not of course intend to deny the affinity of the Phœnicians with the Canaanitish race that dwelt southward between the valley of the Jordan and the sea-coast; but simply affirms, that the particular tribe which settled down on the narrow strip of territory at the foot of Libanus, was immigrant directly from the Persian Gulf, and brought with it the seafaring aptitudes and tendencies which it had acquired in its original home. Within the area occupied by what has been called the Semitic family of nations, shut in by the Persian and Arabian gulfs, and bounded northwards by the Taurus and the basin of the Euphrates and Tigris, three remarkable movements took place at a remote period, which do not appear to have had any connection with one another, but have each left a distinct impression on the earliest notices of history: the passage of the Phœnicians, or, as they called themselves, Canaanites, in a north-westerly direction across the country from sea to sea; the peaceful immigration of Abraham from the upper region of the Euphrates into the low country, sloping towards the Mediterranean, which was already tenanted by Canaanitish tribes; and the

hostile irruption of the Hyksos, Arabian nomades, into Lower Egypt. The people engaged in these movements must have been all of one race, though their interior distinctions and relations to one another it is not very easy to assign. Mr. Kenrick supposes the Philistines, on whose origin so much theory and conjecture has been expended, to have been of the same stock, and closely allied to the Phœnicians. He places their original home, like that of the Phœnicians, on the Persian Gulf (p. 55). The Canaanites who dwelt south of Carmel and Tabor, were warlike in their habits, and stoutly resisted the entrance of the Abrahamidæ into their territory under Joshua; while the Phœnicians, from the time of their earliest settlement, seem to have been averse to war by land, and to have turned all their thoughts to the extension of their piratical excursions in the waters of the Mediterranean.* This diversity of genius and occupation among the different Semitic peoples affected their feelings towards each other, and brought them into various relations of friendship and hostility. Thus, while a common language, and not a few indications of dispersion from a common centre, show them to have been all of one primitive stock,—in the genealogical table preserved in Genesis x., while the Hebrew race is traced up through Eber to Shem, the Canaanites are derived under a curse from Ham. Mr. Kenrick is of opinion that the principle of classification in this table is that of colour; and that we are thus to account for the ascription to a different origin, of nations clearly proving their affinity by the use of a language fundamentally the same (p. 49). It is certainly true, that the peoples who are here placed with the Canaanites among the descendants of Ham,—the Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Mauritanians (Cush, Mizraim, and Phut),—must have been distinguished formerly, as they are now, by their dark complexion; nor is it impossible that this difference of colour may have been among the causes of international aversion, as we observe it is at this day between the negroes and the whites of the United States. Still we find it difficult to read the ninth and tenth chapters of Genesis and avoid the conclusion, that something deeper and more personal than mere reference to an outward sign of classification,—some consciousness of irreconcilable hostility in territorial relations and political pretensions, in manners, and in religion,—must have been at work at the time of the construction of this table, to occasion so marked and invidious a distinction between nations whose language and traditions preserved so many evidences of a common descent. We read the language of Genesis, "These are the sons of Ham after their families, *after their tongues,* in their countries, and in

* The inhabitants of Laish are described in the book of Judges as "dwelling careless, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure" (xviii. 7).

their nations," differently from Mr. Kenrick; not as "indicating that varieties of language prevailed among them," but as intended to mark in the most decided way, by language as well as by other tokens, a sharp uneffaceable line of separation between the Shemitic and Chamitic families.* Such an interpretation seems most in accordance with the language of Scripture, where *tongues* are constantly introduced among the characteristics of national distinction. When our author adds, "Even supposing that the Phœnicians, when they migrated, spoke a dialect more Arabic than Hebrew, they may in the course of time have adopted that of the country. The progenitors of the Jews must have spoken Syriac, not Hebrew, that is Canaanitic," does he not apply too decidedly to the remote period in question, the developed dialectic diversities which belong to a later day and a more advanced civilisation? The only facts recorded appear to bear against his assumption. From the first, Abraham and his descendants found no difficulty in conversing with the Canaanitish inhabitants of Palestine;† and all the subsisting relics of the Phœnician language have been interpreted through the medium of the Hebrew.

In speaking of the Indian, Persian, and German, as "classed now under one family, from similarity of language, though one belongs to the descendants of Japheth, and the other of Ham," Mr. Kenrick seems to recognise a reality in the ethnological distinctions of the table in Genesis, which we should have supposed neither its place in the Biblical narrative nor its internal character entitled it to claim. We can find in it nothing more than a record of popular traditional belief, tinged in some places by national prejudice.

He adopts the notion of colour being anciently a ground of national classifications, and the cause of national appellations, on other occasions. The name of Phœnicia, for example, he supposes to be derived, not from the date-palms which grew there in such abundance, and which Movers, we observe, regards as its probable origin, but from the red-brown colour (φοῖνιξ), "such as is produced by heat," of the natives; just as a still darker shade of complexion is denoted by αἴθιοψ or αἰθοψ (p. 68).

Mr. Kenrick has traced very clearly and satisfactorily the gradual diffusion of Phœnician colonisation from east to west over the three basins of the Mediterranean. In no part of the work does the rare accomplishment of his scholarship appear to

* The descendants of Shem are distinguished in the same way, "after their families, *after their tongues*" (Gen. x. 31); and among them we must assume a radical *identity* of speech.

† See, in particular (Gen. xxiii. 8), the description of Abraham's treaty with the Hittites for the purchase of Machpelah, where the word rendered in our version "communed" (דָּבַר) seems specially to indicate *direct verbal intercourse.*

more advantage than in his subtle detection of the points of early contact between the Phœnician and the Pelasgic and Hellenic races, by a sagacious combination of the faint and scattered indications of ancient fable. To render full justice to the eminent merits of his work in this respect, would demand more time and space than we have at present at our disposal. We give the following extracts as a specimen of his mode of handling the subject:

"The expression of Thucydides, 'that the Phœnicians and the Carians colonised the greater part of the islands of the Ægean,' that is, the Cyclades and Sporades, leaves it doubtful what there belongs to each respectively; but there is abundant evidence, in special traditions, of the former presence of the Phœnicians in many of them. Indeed they lie so directly in the track of navigators proceeding from Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete, to the mainland of Greece, that if not colonised, they must have been visited by them. Kara has been already mentioned; besides the evidence of its having been peopled by Phœnicians, which the tradition respecting Cadmus affords, it has been observed that it was celebrated for the production of those embroidered garments which were a characteristic fabric of the Sidonian looms. The worship of Poseidon and Athene, said to have been introduced by Cadmus, may be the effect of later intercourse, as we know, from the example of Athenian inscriptions, that the Phœnicians left memorials of their worship in places which they only visited for purposes of commerce.... Cythera, off the coast of Laconia, was celebrated for the fine quality of the purple yielded by the shell-fish of its rocky shores, and was said to have derived its name from Cytherus, a Phœnician. A better proof of its connection with Phœnicia is the existence here, from the earliest times, of the worship of Venus Urania, already alluded to as of undoubted Phœnician origin. In the Homeric poetry Aphrodite bears the name of Cythereia; but a sufficient length of time had already intervened since the Greeks became acquainted with her, for her conversion from the chaste and terrific divinity who was worshipped in Phœnicia to the voluptuous laughter-loving deity of the Iliad and Odyssey. Probably the affinity of the worship of the armed Venus with the martial tastes of the Spartans may have maintained her worship here and in Laconia, in which she had also temples, and a celebrated statue in a brazen panoply.... Thebes is the scene of an important part of the mythic history of Cadmus; but regarding it as devised in a later age, in order to connect the scattered traces of Phœnician colonisation in Asia Minor, the islands and mainland of Greece, we need not inquire by what route he and his companions reached Bœotia. The fable represents him as migrating hither from Thrace, which in mythical geography included the sea-coast of Macedonia, and fixing his abode on the acropolis of Thebes at the suggestion of the oracle of Delphi. It is an historical fact, that this acropolis bore the name of Cadmeia, and the existence of a Phœnician settlement at Thebes was assumed and argued from by the oldest Greek historian. The delibe-

rate opinion of Herodotus, founded on inquiry, is surely entitled to outweigh all those historical speculations which deny to Phœnicia any influence on the civilisation of Greece. Whatever may have been the case in regard to the islands of the Ægean, here are distinct traces of a permanent settlement. No visit for mere commercial purposes could have brought the Phœnicians to the inland site of Thebes, nor have led to such an intimate intermingling of Phœnician mythology with its history as we find in the legends of this city. In the occupation of the Cadmea by Cadmus, in the fable of the dragon's teeth and the armed men, in his reputation as the inventor of brazen armour, in the significance of his name which means a suit of armour,* we have evident traces of a conquest, which by the use of brazen weapons the Phœnicians were enabled to make over the native inhabitants of Bœotia, the Aones, Temmices, Leleges, and Hyantes, and which they preserved for several generations, till they were expelled by Argives from the Peloponnesus. By the same event, the worship and mysteries of the Cabiri, which were closely connected with Phœnicia, were expelled the Theban territory. The connection of the history of Bacchus and the introduction of his worship, with the history of Cadmus, point to a migration of the Phœnicians from Thrace and Bœotia rather than immediately from Phœnicia. For the oldest mention of the Dionysiac worship in Grecian literature represents Bacchus as in conflict with Lycurgus, king of the Edones, inhabiting the country near Amphipolis, and he had no original or special connection with the Phœnician mythology, though he may have been identified with some of its divinities by that system of interpretation and syncretism which prevailed in later times. Thrace was the immediate, Lydia and Phrygia the remoter source from which it came into Greece, and Thebes the first place in Southern Greece in which it gained a footing. The worship of Minerva at Thebes appears to have been more purely Phœnician." (pp. 94-100.)

In a former work† Mr. Kenrick had employed the same principle of investigation to connect together the scattered notices of the worship of the Cabiri, and detect their presence under the endless shapes of mythic transformation, tracking them first of all along the acknowledged seats of the Pelasgi, and through these indicating the probability of still earlier Phœnician influence, as though the Pelasgi had been the original link between Phœnician and Hellenic civilisation. In the present volume, as the result of further reflection and inquiry, Mr. Kenrick expresses a more decided opinion as to the undoubted influence of the Phœnicians on the Greeks. We are surprised that the dissertation just referred to (for a dissertation it is, though it appears in the unpretending form of a note), should not have excited more attention than, as far as we are aware, it has ever received. It can only have been neglected from the general indifference of our country to all

* Κάδμος. δόρυ, λόφος, ἀσπίς. Hesych. The root is κάζω, *instruo*.

† The Egypt of Herodotus.

questions that lie remote from the immediate interests of the day; for it has ever seemed to us one of the best specimens of modern scholarship, exhibiting a remarkable union of the opposite gifts of analysis and combination, exercised in a field which demands the greatest ingenuity and most varied learning, yet withal so abounding in deceitful appearances, that except under the guidance of a consummate judgment, the acutest minds will wander the furthest from truth, and the deepest erudition be the most prolific of absurdity.

On the subject of the alphabet Mr. Kenrick adheres to the generally received opinion, that it consisted, in the earliest form in which we can trace it, both among the Phœnicians, and among the Greeks who derived it from them, of only sixteen letters, including the *vau* and the *digamma;* and he quotes a very curious passage from Irenæus in confirmation of it (p. 151). We observe that he differs on this point from Professor Key (*On the Alphabet,* p. 27), who argues that in both languages it must originally have contained twenty letters, from the fact that the *zain* and the *zeta,* the *cheth* and the *eta,* the *teth* and the *theta,* the *samech* and the *xi,* fill corresponding places in the two alphabets, and must therefore have been there from the first,—obviously distinguishable in this respect from the four last letters of the Greek alphabet, which have all the appearance of a simultaneous posterior addition.

Mr. Kenrick thinks the Phœnicians penetrated to the far west at a very early date, and had probably made a settlement at Tartessus in Spain before the time of Moses (p. 118). In this part of his work, however, we miss a preliminary criticism of the sources from which many of his statements are drawn. In regard to his Greek and Latin authorities this was unnecessary; for here the labours of Heyne, Heeren, and Dahlmann had already accomplished all that was possible. But for the books of the Old Testament something more was required in the present state of opinion respecting them: yet they are constantly cited indiscriminately and without remark, as if no question had ever been raised by learned and serious men about their age and character and principle of composition. This is very unsatisfactory; as, from being left in ignorance on these points, we do not know when a passage is quoted, what is the limit of time within which we may accept its testimony as pertinent and reliable. The author furnishes us with no criteria for testing the grounds of his own judgment. We have already glanced at this deficiency in speaking of Mr. Kenrick's use of the genealogical table (Gen. x.), and we are made to feel it again in his determination from the same authority, of the probable date of the Phœnician occupation of Tartessus. Tarshish is mentioned in this table along with

Kittim (the isles of the Mediterranean), with Elisha (probably Elis, or Peloponnesus), and with Dodanim (possibly Dodona),* among the descendants of Japheth. Upon which the remark is made: "If this chapter be of the same date with the rest of the book of Genesis, it must have been written in the fifteenth century B.C., and it is credible that even then Phœnician mariners had passed the Pillars of Hercules." We do not affirm the incredibility of the event; but if evidence of its actual occurrence be intended to be derived from this passage in Genesis, we cannot avoid remarking, that it involves a condition, and rests on an assumption; the condition being, that the chapter be of the same date with the rest of the book, and the assumption, that the book itself, in the form and fulness in which we now possess it, was actually written by Moses 1500 B.C. Subsequent statements do not seem to confirm this very early date for the Phœnician colonisation of Tartessus. "Tarshish is not mentioned in the historical books of Scripture from Genesis to the time of Solomon" (p. 131). And the two psalms (the 48th and 72d) where the name occurs, could not have been written earlier than his reign. Traditions concur in representing the earliest settlements in Tartessus to have been made by Tyrians (p. 124); and Gadeira their principal factory or emporium in that region, was founded 1100 B.C., about the commencement of the kingly period among the Israelites. In the course of the eleventh century B.C., Tyre must have grown rapidly in power and wealth, and the name of its distant colony had begun to be more widely known. In the time of David, Tyre had already eclipsed the more ancient city of Sidon: yet we are told that "the Tyrian annals contained no *historical* facts earlier than the reign of Hiram," who was his contemporary (p. 169). These surmises as to the probability of a later discovery and knowledge of Tarshish would weigh nothing, it is true, against positive evidence to the contrary; and it is because we desire such evidence, if it can be had, and would gladly see the chronological value of the earlier scriptural statements clearly established (though hesitation about it in certain points is quite consistent with deep reverence for the *religious* authority of the Bible), that we cannot but regret a scholar so profound and acute as Mr. Kenrick should not have felt it necessary to express his opinion on a point of criticism directly affecting the basis of many of his inferences and reasonings.

On the whole, the Hellenic side of his subject has been more fully developed and more satisfactorily handled by Mr. Kenrick than the Hebraic. He has so entirely confined himself in the latter direction to an indication of the simple statements of the sacred writers, and abstained so religiously from even the sober

* Gesenius, Hebräisch. Wörterb., sub voc. Tarshish and Kittim.

speculation which facts themselves would naturally have suggested, and of which he has shown himself such a master in his treatment of early Greek history, that he has omitted to fill up the meagre outline of the annalist with the living colours which legitimate inference and cautious comparison might have supplied, and failed in consequence to impart to some portions of his work the deepest interest of which they were susceptible. He has observed, indeed, at the conclusion of the volume, that the "history of the Phœnician states has been treated too much from the polemical point of view" (p. 454), and that injustice has been done them from the supposed opposition of their interests to those of the Jews. But this idea has not been worked out; we do not recollect any instances of its application to particular cases in the body of the work. Yet the affinities and the distinctions between the Phœnician and the Hebrew peoples are so marked and so curious, that a free comparison of them from a dispassionate and elevated point of view, would have helped to bring out more clearly the true significance of this period of history, and must have redounded in a more perfect understanding and more reverential appreciation of the history and literature of the Hebrews. We have long felt, that to penetrate to the *divine* element which we firmly believe to exist in that history and literature, we must approach them with a more *human* feeling; that we must divest ourselves of the distrustful cautiousness in every thing respecting them, which only implies the weakness or the absence of a genuine faith; and that instead of insulating them from the great community of human interests, it should rather be our object, by surrendering foregone conclusions, and freely recognising their manifold natural relations to other forms of mental activity and social existence, to discern with a clearer vision and grasp with a firmer belief their appointed place and function in the grand economy of Providence. That two nations, issuing from the same stock and speaking essentially the same language, distinguished from their neighbours by some peculiar usages,* dwelling within the limits of the same territory, pressed upon and influenced by the same contiguous civilisations—should nevertheless have struck out so different a type of national character; should have been so strikingly distinguished from each other in arts, manners, beliefs, and aims, and left so different an impression on the subsequent course of human history—is one of those phenomena which, as we interpret them, yield the most conclusive evidence that the genius and destined career of nations as of individuals are regulated by influences which cannot originate within the system of material causation, but must issue from an all-directing Intelligence which transcends and embraces it. The agree-

* The Hebrews and the Phœnicians both practised circumcision (p. 329).

ment and the diversity of the Hebrew and the Phœnician character are curiously brought out in small incidental particulars. In a Carthaginian tablet discovered at Marseilles in 1845, and containing a tariff of the price of different victims, or perhaps of their commutation—which has been interpreted by Movers, and fully described by Mr. Kenrick in his note on the Phœnician alphabet and language (p. 175-8)—we are struck with a general similarity in the tone of the regulations to that of the Levitical portions of the Pentateuch; and yet, in the midst of this external conformity, the essential distinction in the *moral* character of the temple-service of the two peoples is strikingly evinced by Movers's very probable rendering of a word in the Phœnician inscription, which admits of direct comparison with a passage in Deuteronomy (xxiii. 18). If Movers be correct in his translation, we have, in the Carthaginian table, a precept relative to the offerings of one of the *ἱερόδουλαι*, or consecrated female slaves, attached for impure purposes to many of the temples of antiquity, especially in places of great commercial resort, like Corinth or Marseilles. In Deuteronomy the same class of persons are alluded to (indeed the same Semitic word occurs, both in the Hebrew law and in the Phœnician inscription); but in accordance with that severe purity which pervades the whole Mosaic code, their offerings are forbidden as an abomination to Jehovah. Still, both nations, true to the general impulse which a higher Power had impressed on them, were working out unconsciously, in spite of cleaving prejudices, dark passions, and degrading sensuality, the great purposes of an all-embracing Providence, and preparing the elements of a civilisation nobler and purer than their own; one, nursing close within its bosom a seed of spiritual life, till it should have grown up into beauty and the world be prepared to accept the expanded flower; the other, scattering far and wide over the western world the materials of a vast industrial development, essential to the growth of the outward life of man; each destined in its time and place to check the other's exorbitance and supplement its deficiency; and both cherishing a power whose internal resources and manifold applications they little suspected, and the wide range of whose flight into the limitless future of the human race they could not foresee.

> "Omnibus mundi Dominator horis
> Aptat urgendas per inane pennas:
> Pars adhuc nido latet, et futuros
> Crescit in annos."*

Mr. Kenrick passes a favourable judgment on the Phœnicians as a people; and we see no reason for dissenting from it.

* Casimir. Carm. i. 4.

"No nation which enjoyed ascendency in the ancient world conferred such benefits on the rest of mankind, and at the same time inflicted upon it so little injury, as Phœnicia. Its settlements were usually peaceful; it rarely aimed at conquest, and it diffused from the East to the farthest West the knowledge of letters and the advantages of commerce."

Doubtless they were not free from the vices to which their peculiar form of civilisation exposed them, and which the Hebrew prophets, from their higher and at the same time narrower point of view, have denounced with such unsparing severity. But their riches and luxury were regarded with envy by their poorer neighbours; and this feeling, mingling with dislike of their pride, their sensuality, and their selfish grasping spirit, disposed less prosperous communities to view their humiliation with satisfaction, and to anticipate their downfall with joy; and we must allow for its influence in the descriptions transmitted to us of their corruption and wickedness.

Mr. Kenrick has an interesting chapter on the religion of the Phœnicians, which he has treated with his usual clearness and discrimination. Male and female deities were worshipped in the temples of Phœnicia. Under various titles and forms, they seem to have been expressions more or less direct of the great creative and restorative energies of nature, supposed to reside specially in the sun and the moon. Baal and Astarte, or Ashtaroth, are the names most familiar to us from the Old Testament, as the principal objects of Phœnician adoration. In the Phœnician, as in other ancient religions, deity lay within the limits of the physical universe, and was subject to its ultimate laws: in that of the Hebrews, God was above the world, and independent of it; "in the beginning He created the heavens and the earth;" and He had direct access by his Spirit to the soul of man. The distinction is a vital one, and of immense effect in the operation of the two religious systems on the moral condition of the human race. Each of the cities of the Phœnician confederation had its tutelary god. Melcarth,—one of the many personifications of the sun, and the counterpart of Hercules among the Greeks, hence often called the Tyrian Hercules,—was the special deity of Tyre, and had his temples in the various settlements of the Phœnicians to the far west. In addition to his other attributes, he presided over navigation, and was the god of trade and war. For some reason which lies hid in the remote obscurity of the subject, but which has operated with remarkable uniformity, human sacrifices have been constantly associated with a sun and planet worship; and we find traces of their existence among the Phœnicians. Mr. Kenrick is of opinion that they were not so frequent as has been asserted;

and it is not impossible, that with the growth of arts and refinement, and under the humanising influence of commerce, the religion may gradually have relaxed, except under the stimulus of occasional excitement, the more repulsive features of its original ferocity. With some of the temples, especially of the female deities, licentious rites were associated; though in the Phœnician form of worship this voluptuous character was less prominently expressed than in the Babylonian. Still its horrors and impurities were sufficiently odious, and fearfully tenacious of life; such as only the severe energy of the Hebraic monotheism was effectual to check, and the refined anthropomorphism of the Greeks, if it could not altogether abolish, endeavoured partially to soften and idealise. Diodorus Siculus's description of the sacrifice of infants to Saturn or Moloch—another form of the sun—at Carthage, is one of the most fearful pictures on record of a frenzied aberration of the religious sentiment:

"Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum."

It is creditable to the Greeks and Romans, that they made efforts at various times to put a stop to this inhuman practice, though it endured in spite of them to a remote age. It had struck a deep root, and was difficult to exterminate. Plutarch says, that Gelon made its cessation an article in his treaty of peace with the Carthaginians after the battle of Himera;* while it was Tiberius, according to Tertullian, who finally abolished it, and hung the priests on the trees of their sacred grove. The latter tendencies of the old civilisation were gradually preparing the way for the ascendency of a more benignant religion.

The subject of which Mr. Kenrick has treated in the present volume, the thorough and sometimes the minute criticism with which he has investigated its several points, and the calm, equable, unimpassioned character of his style, will probably prevent his work from becoming popular with that numerous class who read for amusement rather than for instruction, who seek excitement above all things in literature, and are ever in pursuit of paradox or novelty. But those who have a healthier mental appetite, and find knowledge delightful for its own sake, will be attracted to pages that are filled with the most interesting matter drawn from the best sources, selected and compressed with admirable judg-

* De Serâ Numinis Vindictâ, vi. In a passage in his treatise De Superstitione (quoted by Wyttenbach, Animadvers. in loc.), Plutarch has described to the life the horrors of these human sacrifices. The childless rich bought children of the poor, "like lambs or doves," for the occasion.

Τῷ Κρόνῳ—αὐτοὶ τὰ αὑτῶν τέκνα καθιέρευον, οἱ δὲ ἄτεκνοι παρὰ τῶν πενήτων ὠνούμενοι παιδία κατέσφαζον καθάπερ ἄρνας ἢ νεοσσούς· παρειστήκει δὲ ἡ μητὴρ ἀτεγκτος καὶ ἀστένακτος· εἰ δὲ στενάξαιεν ἢ δακρύσειεν, ἔδει τῆς τιμῆς στέρεσθαι, τὸ δὲ παιδίον οὐδὲν ἧττον ἐθύετο· κρότου δὲ κατεπίμπλατο πάντα πρὸ τοῦ ἀγάλματος, ἵνα μὴ ἀλεόντων καὶ τυμπανιζόντων, ἕνεκα τοῦ μὴ γενέσθαι τὴν βρῆν τῶν θρήνων ἐξάκουστον.

ment, and made intelligible to every one by the singular clearness and precision with which it is presented. For scholars who can appreciate the depth and accuracy of learning which it displays, this work will possess a peculiar value, as bringing before them in a form at once brief and comprehensive the collective results of a thorough critical examination of all our existing sources of information respecting one of the most curious and important peoples of the ancient world. Some, who may not possess the author's great attainments, will venture probably to differ from him on insulated points, in the exercise of that modest and manly freedom of judgment of which his own writings afford so fine an example; indeed, it is one of their excellences, that from the thorough honesty of their execution they furnish a man who thinks as he reads with the means of justifying a dissent from their conclusions. In closing this volume, we look back on it with more than ordinary satisfaction as a specimen of sterling English scholarship. Thoroughness is the character stamped on every page. The learning is all original, worked out by the writer himself from the primitive source, and carefully passed, ere it deposit its results on paper, through the sifting and refining process of his own clear judgment and searching analysis. It is not got up hastily at second-hand from the labours of others, and invested with an array of authorities which it has not the merit of having searched and tested; but it presents us with the ripened fruit of the study and thought of years. Its display of learning is unobtrusive and needful, simply illustrative or confirmatory of statements in the text; and so much of it as appears is but a sample of the richer treasures that are implied. It is dispensed with a quiet consciousness of reserved strength and solid opulence—with a certain dryness and almost indifference of manner,—that are in striking contrast with the fidgety bustle and pretence of the quacks of literature. Works of such a character are not very abundant in our age, nor are they adequately appreciated when they appear; but we should cordially welcome them when they do come, as satisfactory indications, amidst the increasing tendency to superficiality and the rage for popularising every thing, that there are men yet among us who comprehend the functions of genuine scholarship, and well understand that knowledge deserving the name is not to be snatched by handfuls and then scattered forthwith among the crowd, but must be drawn from the primal fountains that lie remote among the heights and solitudes of literature, must be appropriated and assimilated, and wrought into its own nature, by the action of the mind itself, must be animated by principle, and enlightened by theory, and reduced to harmonious self-consistency; and that only after the study and meditation of years, should its essence and its extract

be given forth in appropriate forms for the nourishment of the general mind. All literature need not, indeed, and cannot be of this description; but it is indispensable to the maintenance of our rank among civilised nations, that due encouragement should be given to the production of a certain number of works bearing this high character of scholarship. They help to balance the opposite scale, which gravitates downwards. They keep up the standard of excellence, and check the tendency to a continual depression towards the level of the ever-widening area of popular instruction. Let not this area be contracted at a single point; let it expand more and more; but let the surface occupied by the many be continually raised towards the height of the few, not the eminence of the few brought down to the level of the many.

Mr. Kenrick is one of those who have attained to first-rate scholarship, and rendered the highest services to learning acknowledged beyond the limits of his own country, outside all the privileges and independent of all the honours and encouragements that are conferred by our great ecclesiastical establishment and the two noble universities so intimately associated with it and so deeply imbued with its spirit. His example shows that the love of truth may be as powerful an incentive to industry as the prospect of a bishopric, and the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake yield as full a recompense as the richest benefice which the premier could bestow. There always have been, there still are, and we trust there ever will be, a few such men in all the divisions of the wide field of enlightened and conscientious nonconformity. We honour them from our heart. Taking our stand on the characteristic principles of this Review, apart from all sectarian engagement and prepossession, and looking out on the future of our country with the broad vision and unbiassed sympathies of a truly *national* heart, we cannot but see in the preservation of such men amongst us, in the encouragement of their learning, and in the extension of their mental and social influence, an indispensable guarantee for the maintenance of the best interests of Christian truth and rational liberty. A free learning, spiritualised and ennobled by a free religion, is one of the most urgent requirements of our time; but it is imperilled between opposite dangers—sacerdotal hollowness and formalism on one hand, and the rude anarchy of unlettered fanaticism or coarse unbelief on the other. Till the old universities are more thoroughly purged from the ecclesiastical element which so powerfully leavens them, they cannot become suitable places either for the training or for the working of the kind of men whom our age imperiously demands; and the highest interests of those universities themselves and their associated church will be best promoted, not by the annihilation of all noble and effectual rivalry, but by the constant presence of a competition

which they cannot but respect, and which must rouse them to the utmost development of their internal resources of self-renovation. Nothing remains, therefore, in the actual state of things, but to sustain with unabated energy and zeal all those institutions which base the encouragement of the highest learning on the recognition of equal religious liberty, and to guard with the utmost jealousy, and nurse into the healthiest activity, the two principles whose union they have consecrated. We tremble lest either of them should be sacrificed by worldly indifference on the part of those who ought to be their protectors. Should priestly influence undermine their strength and absorb their vitality, learning may still retain its name and exercise its function, but it will lose the noble front and manly bearing of a free servant of truth, and become a slave in the mill of a compelled conformity. Should the other alternative prevail, and free religion be abandoned to the charge of an ignorant and unlettered multitude, there would be nothing to mediate between vicious extremes; nothing to confront the pretensions of an established priesthood, enjoying in that case an undisputed monopoly of the forms and materials of learning; nothing to control and guide by the influence of well-disciplined intellect and solid attainment, the wild impulses of religious fervour, mistaking license for liberty, confounding violence with strength, and conferring on passionate prejudice the sanctity of reverent conviction.

Art. VII.—W. M. THACKERAY, ARTIST AND MORALIST.

The Newcomes. By the Author of "Vanity Fair," &c.

Miscellanies, Prose and Verse. By W. M. Thackeray. Vols. I. and II. London, Bradbury and Evans. 1856.

We are not among those who believe that the "goad of contemporary criticism" has much influence either in "abating the pride" or stimulating the imagination of authors. The human system assimilates praise, and rejects censure, the latter sometimes very spasmodically. A writer or labourer of any sort rarely profits by criticism on his productions; here and there a very candid man may gather a hint; but for the most part criticism is only used by an author as a test of the good taste of his judge. It is a fiction, in fact, long religiously maintained in the forms of our reviews, that we write for the benefit of the reviewee. In most cases, and at any rate in that of a mature and established author, this didactic figment would be as well put aside. A new work, a body of writings, by a man who has attained a wide audience and

produced a considerable impression on his times, constitutes a subject for investigation; we examine it as we do other matters of interest, we analyse, we dissect, we compare notes about it; we estimate its influences; and as man is the most interesting of all studies, we examine what light it throws on the producing mind, and endeavour to penetrate from the work to some insight into the special genius of the writer;—and all this for our own pleasure and profit, not because we think our remarks will prove beneficial to him who is the subject of them. Mr. Thackeray has outgrown even the big birch-rod of quarterly criticism. A long and industrious apprenticeship to the art of letters has been rewarded by a high place in his profession. He is reaping a deserved harvest of profit and fame; he can afford to smile at censure; and praise comes to him as a tribute rather than an offering. We propose, then, simply to say what we have found in the books we have read, and what light they appear to us to throw upon the genius of the author, more particularly in the two capacities we have indicated in the heading of this article.

As an Artist, he is probably the greatest painter of manners that ever lived. He has an unapproachable quickness, fineness, and width of observation on social habits and characteristics, a memory the most delicate, and a perfectly amazing power of vividly reproducing his experience. It is customary to compare him with Addison and Fielding. He has perhaps not quite such a fine stroke as the former; but the *Spectator* is thin and meagre compared with *Vanity Fair*. Fielding has breadth and vigour incomparably greater; but two of his main excellencies, richness of accessory life and variety of character, fly to the beam when weighed against the same qualities in Thackeray. Fielding takes pride to himself because, retaining the general professional identity, he can draw a distinction between two landladies. Thackeray could make a score stand out—distinct impersonations. It is startling to look at one of his novels, and see with how many people you have been brought into connection. Examine *Pendennis*. It would take a couple of pages merely to catalogue the *dramatis personæ;* every novel brings us into contact with from fifty to a hundred new and perfectly distinct individuals.

When we speak of manners, we of course include men. Manners may be described without men; but it is lifeless, colourless work, unless they are illustrated by individual examples. Still, in painting of manners, as distinguished from painting of character, the men must always be more or less subsidiary to their clothing. Mr. Thackeray tells us of a room hung with "richly carved gilt frames (with pictures in them)." Such are the works of the social satirist and caricaturist. He puts in his figures as a nucleus for his framework. A man is used to eluci-

date and illustrate his social environment. This is less the case with Mr. Thackeray than with most artists of the same order. He might almost be said to be characterised among them by the greater use he makes of individual portraiture, as he certainly is by the fertility of his invention. Still, at bottom he is a painter of manners, not of individual men.

The social human heart, man in relation to his kind—that is his subject. His actors are distinct and individual,—truthfully, vigorously, felicitously drawn; masterpieces in their way; but the personal character of each is not the supreme object of interest with the author. It is only a contribution to a larger and more abstract subject of contemplation. Man is his study; but man the social animal, man considered with reference to the experiences, the aims, the affections, that find their field in his intercourse with his fellow-men: never man the individual soul. He never penetrates into the interior, secret, *real* life that every man leads in isolation from his fellows, that chamber of being open only upwards to heaven and downwards to hell. He is wise to abstain; he does well to hold the ground where his pre-eminence is unapproached,—to be true to his own genius. But this genius is of a lower order than the other. The faculty that deals with and represents the individual soul in its complete relations is higher than that which we have ascribed to Mr. Thackeray. There is a common confusion on this subject. We hear it advanced on the one side, that to penetrate to the hidden centre of character, and draw from thence,—which of course can only be done by imagination,—is higher than to work from the external details which can be gathered by experience and observation; and on the other hand, that it is much easier to have recourse to the imagination than to accumulate stores from a knowledge of actual life,—to draw on the fancy than to reproduce the living scene around us. The answer is not difficult. It is easier, no doubt, to produce faint vague images of character from the imagination than to sketch from the real external manifestations of life before our eyes; and easier to make such shadows pass current, just because they are shadows, and have not, like the others, the realities ready to confront them. But take a higher degree of power, and the scale turns. It is easier to be Ben Jonson, or even Goethe, than Shakespeare. In general we may say, that the less elementary the materials of his art-structure, the less imagination does the artist require, and of the less creative kind;—the architect less than the sculptor, the historian less than the poet, the novelist less than the dramatist. Reproducers of social life have generally rather a marshalling than a creative power. And in the plot and conduct of his story Mr. Thackeray does not exhibit more than a very

high power of grouping his figures and arranging his incidents; but his best characters are certainly creations, living breathing beings, characteristic not only by certain traits, but by that atmosphere of individuality which only genius can impart. Their distinctive feature and their defect, as we have before stated, is this, that not one of them is complete; each is only so much of an individual as is embraced in a certain abstract whole. We never know any one of them completely, in the way we know ourselves, in the way we imagine others. We know just so much of them as we can gather by an intercourse in society. Mr. Thackeray does not penetrate further; he does not profess to show more. He says openly this is all he knows of them. He relates their behaviour, displays as much of the feelings and the character as the outward demeanour, the actions, the voice, can bear witness to, and no more. It is exactly as if you had met the people in actual life, mixed constantly with them, known them as we know our most intimate friends. Of course this is all we can *know* of a man; but not all we can imagine, not all the artist can, if he chooses, convey to us. We don't know our nearest friends; we are always dependent on our imagination. From the imperfect materials that observation and sympathy can furnish we construct a whole of our own, more or less conformable to the reality according to our opportunities of knowledge, and with more or less completeness and distinctness according to our imaginative faculty; and every man, of course, is something really different from that which every man around him conceives him to be. But without this imaginative conception we should not know one another at all, we should only have disconnected hints of contemporary existence.

It is perhaps the highest distinguishing prerogative of poetry or fiction, or whatever we choose as the most comprehensive name for that art which has language for its medium, that it gives the artist the power of delineating the actual interior life and individual character of a living soul. It is the only art that does so. The dramatist and the novelist have the power of imagining a complete character, and of presenting before you their conception of it; and the more complete this is, and the more unmistakably they can impress you with the idea of it in its fulness and in its most secret depths, the nearer they attain to the perfection of their art. Thackeray leaves the reader to his own imagination. He gives no clues to his character, as such; he is not leading to an image of his own. He probably has a very distinct, but no complete conception of them himself; he knows no more of them than he tells us. He is interested more in the external exhibitions of character and the feelings than in character itself; aim is not to reproduce any single nature, but the image that

the whole phenomenon of social life has left impressed on his mind. Of the tastes and temper that find their natural vent in this form of art he gives a picture in one of his books, which we have no doubt is lifelike.

"If he could not get a good dinner, he sate down to a bad one with entire contentment; if he could not procure the company of witty, or great, or beautiful persons, he put up with any society that came to hand; and was perfectly satisfied in a tavern parlour, or on board a Greenwich steam-boat, or in a jaunt to Hampstead with Mr. Finucane, his colleague at the Pall-Mall Gazette; or in a visit to the summer theatres across the river; or to the Royal Gardens of Vauxhall, where he was on terms of friendship with the great Simpson, and where he shook the principal comic singer or the lovely equestrian of the arena by the hand. And while he could watch the grimaces or the graces of those with a satiric humour that was not deprived of sympathy, he could look on with an eye of kindness at the lookers-on too; at the roystering youth bent upon enjoyment, and here taking it: at the honest parents, with their delighted children laughing and clapping their hands at the show: at the poor outcasts, whose laughter was less innocent, though perhaps louder, and who brought their shame and their youth here, to dance and be merry till the dawn at least; and to get bread and drown care. Of this sympathy with all conditions of men, Arthur often boasted: he was pleased to possess it: and said that he hoped thus to the last he should retain it. As another man has an ardour for art or music, or natural science, Mr. Pen said that anthropology was his favourite pursuit; and had his eyes always eagerly open to its infinite varieties and beauties: contemplating with an unfailing delight all specimens of it in all places to which he resorted, whether it was the coquetting of a wrinkled dowager in a ball-room, or a high-bred young beauty blushing in her prime there; whether it was a hulking guardsman coaxing a servant-girl in the Park—or innocent little Tommy that was feeding the ducks whilst the nurse listened. And indeed a man whose heart is pretty clean can indulge in this pursuit with an enjoyment that never ceases, and is only perhaps the more keen because it is secret and has a touch of sadness in it; because he is of his mood and humour lonely, and apart although not alone."

Individual character, however, is the deeper and more interesting study; and the writings prompted by genius which delights more in the habits and qualities and casual self-delineations of man than in man himself, always disappoint us by our half-acquaintance with the personages of the story. As for the subsidiary middle-distance people, this matters little. We know as much as we wish to do of Sir Pitt Crawley, of Lord Steyne, of the Major, of Jack Belsize, of Mrs. Hobson Newcome, of Mrs. Mackenzie; but how glad should we be to see more into the real heart of Major Dobbin, of Becky, even of Osborne of Warrington, of Laura; even of shallow and worldly Pendennis, how partial and

limited, how merely external, is our conception! What do we know really of the Colonel, beyond that atmosphere of kindliness and honesty which surrounds one of the most delightful creations poet ever drew? But why complain? Distinctness and completeness of conception are two qualities divided among artists; to one this, to the other that; rarely, perhaps never, has any single man been gifted with a large measure of both. If Mr. Thackeray's genius is not of the very highest order, it is the very highest of its kind. The vividness, the accuracy of his delineation goes far to compensate for a certain want of deeper insight. Let us be grateful for what he gives us, rather than grumble because it is not more. Let us take him as that which he is—a daguerreotypist of the world about us. He is great in costume, in minutiæ too great; he leans too much on them; his figures are to Shakespeare's what Madame Tussaud's waxworks are to the Elgin Marbles—they are exact figures from modern life, and the resemblance is effected somewhat too much by the aid of externals; but there is a matchless sharpness, an elaborateness and finish of detail and circumstantiality about his creations. He has an art peculiarly his own of reproducing every-day language with just enough additional sparkle or humour or pathos of his own to make it piquant and entertaining without losing vraisemblance. His handling of his subject, his execution, are so skilful and masterly, that they for ever hold the attention alive. He takes a commonplace and makes a novelty of it, as a potter makes a jug out of a lump of clay by turning it round in his hands; he tells you page after page of ordinary incident with the freshness of a perennial spring. He is master of the dramatic method which has of late preponderated so much over the narrative. Perhaps the greatest attraction of his writings consists in the wonderful appropriateness of the language and sentiments he puts into the mouths of his various characters; and he not only makes them express themselves, but he manages, without any loss of dramatic propriety, to heighten the tone so as to give some charm or other to what every one says; and not only this, but with an ease which veils consummate dexterity, he makes these dramatic speeches carry on the action and even convey the author's private inuendo. He has no scruple about this. He alters a woman's thought just enough to make it the vehicle for a sarcasm of his own.

"On this the two ladies went through the osculatory ceremony which they were in the habit of performing, and Mrs. Pendennis got a great secret comfort from the little quarrel, for Laura's confession seemed to say: 'That girl can never be a wife for Pen, for she is light-minded and heartless, and quite unworthy of *our noble hero.* He will be sure to find out her unworthiness for his own part, and then he will be saved from this flighty creature and awake out of his delusion.'"

If the power of producing the impression of reality were the test of the highest creative power, Thackeray would perhaps rank higher than any one who has ever lived,—higher than Defoe. But Thackeray's mode of creating an impression of reality is more complicated than Defoe's. It is not that simple act of force by which the latter identifies himself with his hero. It arises in great measure from his way of knitting his narrative on at every point to some link of our every-day experience. His fiction is like a net, every mesh of which has a connecting knot with actual life. Many novelists have a world of their own they inhabit. Thackeray thrusts his characters in among the moving every-day world in which we live. We don't say they are life-like characters; they are mere people. We feel them to be near us, and that we may meet them any day. Dickens creates a race of beings united to us by common sympathies and affections, endeared to us by certain qualities, and infinitely amusing in their eccentricities. Still, we all know perfectly well they are not really human beings; though they are enough so for his purpose and ours. No one supposes that Carker ever really rode on that bay horse of his to the city with those shining teeth; that Traddle's hair really had power to force open a pocket-book. We know that the trial of Bardell *v.* Pickwick is an imaginary contribution to our judicial records, and that Edith Dombey exists only in highflown language and the exigencies of melodrama. But the Major frequents Bond Street, Mrs. Hobson Newcome's virtue is a thing of this life and of London, and it is but one step from questioning the existence of Becky's finished little house in Curzon Street to admitting the philosophy of Berkeley. All artists have an ultimate aim which shapes their working. Miss Bronte wishes to depict marked character; Dickens bends himself to elicit the humorous element in things; Bulwer supposes that he has a philosophy to develop; Disraeli sets himself to be himself admired. Thackeray only desires to be a mirror, to give a true but a brilliant reflection; his vision is warped, no doubt, by peculiarities of his own; but his aim is to reproduce the world as he sees it.

His conception of a story is, like his conception of a character, incomplete. There is no reason why he should begin where he does, no reason why he should end at all. He cuts a square out of life, just as much as he wants, and sends it to Bradbury and Evans. In *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis* the characters are at large, and might at any moment be gathered in to a conclusion. The *Newcomes* begins with the history of Clive's grandfather, and the reasons are independent of art which cause it to conclude before the death of his grandchildren. This, however, is little more than a technical shortcoming, and certainly does not much affect

the reader, to whom skill in the conduct of the story is infinitely more important. And in the conduct of his story, in the management of his narrative, in the interlinking of incident, the way in which one character is made to elucidate another, in which every speech and every entrance carries on the action, in the ease, the grace, the hidden skill with which the intricate complication of interests and events are handled and developed, Mr. Thackeray justly claims our highest admiration. In all that belongs to execution he shows a mastery that almost makes us think he has some secret peculiar power, so effortless is his brilliancy, so easy his touch. His tale is like a landscape growing under the instinctive rather than conscious hand of a master.

The novelist who draws the external life of men is subject to this disadvantage: he is more dependent on his experience than the one who makes individual character his end. It is true, we apprehend, that a poet can, by the force of imagination, and the excitement of particular parts of his nature so as to produce temporary identification, create a character which he has never seen. Goethe bears witness to the fact in his own case. He tells us he drew in his youth characters of which he had no experience, and the truthfulness of which was justified by his mature observation. His evidence is peculiarly valuable, both because no man estimated observation higher, and because his great skill in it would enable him to apply an adequate test to the accuracy of the delineations which he speaks of as springing ready-formed from the resources of his own nature. Of course, even granting that a man could be entirely independent of observation in his conception of a character, he would still require it in order to find a field for the display of that conception; and the more knowledge he commands, the better can he develop his idea. Less, however, will suffice for such an artist than for one who works like Thackeray or Fielding. These are absolutely bounded by the limits of their observation, and consequently in constant danger of self-repetition. Mr. Thackeray is remarkable rather for his exhaustless ingenuity in making the most of the knowledge he possesses than for any very wide range. His fertility becomes the more remarkable when we survey the resources on which he draws. His field is not an extensive one. He stands on the debatable land between the aristocracy and the middle classes —that is his favourite position—and he has evidently observed this form of life mainly from dining-rooms and drawing-rooms. He surveys mankind from the club-room and from country-houses; he has seen soldiers chiefly at mess-dinners; is not familiar with lawyers, though he is with the Temple; has seen a good of a painter's life, and must of course have had a consider-

able knowledge of the professional world of letters, though he is shy of profiting by this experience. He is not at home in provincial life in England, especially town-life, nor has he any extensive acquaintance with the feelings and habits of the lower classes. His knowledge of men about town is profound, exhaustive; his acquaintance among footmen vast. He may have more materials in store; but he begins to indicate a check in the extent of his resources. We know the *carte-du-pays* pretty well now, and have a notion where the boundary-fence runs. The extraordinary thing is the immense variety of the surface within it.

There is one direction, however, in which Mr. Thackeray's resources have always been remarkably limited. It is curious how independent he is of thought; how he manages to exist so entirely on the surface of things. Perhaps he is the better observer of manners because he never cares to penetrate below them. He never refers to a principle, or elucidates a rule of action. But this latter is a characteristic which belongs rather to his character as a moralist than an artist. What we are now concerned with is the absence from his books of what we are accustomed to call ideas. In this respect Thackeray is as inferior to Fielding, as in some others we cannot help thinking him superior. Fielding, you cannot help seeing as you read, was a reflecting man; you feel that his writings are backed by a body of thought, though it is far from an intrusive element in them. Defoe always leaves the impression of an active, vigorous intellect. The force of Thackeray's writings is derived from the strength of his feelings; great genius he has, and general vigour of mind, but not the *intellectus cogitabundus*. Read his charming and eloquent Lectures on the Humorists. You would suppose that thought would ooze out there if any where; but there is no trace of it. He simply states his impressions about the men; and when he speaks of their personal characters, every deference is to be paid to the conception of one who has so sensitive an apprehension of the distinguishing traits of various natures. We are far from wishing for a change in the method of the book; we believe the sort of quiet meditative way in which Mr. Thackeray touches and feels about and probes these men is more valuable and instructive than any elaborate reasonings on them would be, and infinitely better calculated to convey just impressions of what they really were like. But the omission of thought is not the less a characteristic feature; and on one of the pages, where a note of Coleridge is appended to Thackeray's estimate of Sterne, it is curious to see two such utterly opposite modes of approaching a subject brought into juxtaposition. Thackeray never reasons, he never gains one step by deduction; he

relies on his instincts, he appeals to the witness within us; he makes his statement, and leaves it to find its own way to the conviction of his readers; either it approves itself to you, and you accept it, or it does not, and you leave it. The highest moral truths have been thus enunciated, perhaps can only be thus enunciated; but Mr. Thackeray does not enunciate great truths. The most he does is to generalise on his social observation. He is not absolutely destitute of some of those distilled results of a wide knowledge of men which properly come under the head of wisdom; but they are very disproportioned to the extent and penetration of his perception. He occupies a good deal of space in half-meditative, half-emotional harangues on the phenomena of life. Where these do not immediately deal with the affections, they owe their novelty and value to their form alone; and it would not be difficult to enumerate his chief ideas, and count how often they occur. He impresses on us very constantly that "the Peerage" is the Upasbook of English society; that our servants sit in judgment on us below stairs; that good wages make a better nurse than love; that bankers marry earls' daughters, and *vice versâ;* that the pangs of disappointed passion stop short of death; that no man making a schedule of his debts ever included them all. We need not go through the list; and trite as such sayings seem when stripped bare for enumeration, the author for ever invests them with some fresh charm of expression or illustration, which goes far to preserve them from becoming wearisome. It is with the feelings and the affections that Mr. Thackeray is at home. They supply with him the place of reasoning-power. Hence he penetrates deeper into the characters of women than of men. He has never drawn, nor can he ever draw, a man of strong convictions or thoughtful mind; and even in women he deals almost exclusively with the instinctive and emotional side of their nature. This feature gives a certain thinness and superficiality to Mr. Thackeray's works. He nowhere leaves the mark of a thinker. Even his insight is keen and delicate rather than profound. But his deep and tender feeling makes him sensitive to those suggestions which occupy the boundary-land between the affections and the intellect, the country of vain regrets and tender memories, of chastened hopes and softened sadness, the harvest-field in every human soul of love and death. The voice of Mr. Thackeray's tenderness is at once sweet and manly; and when he will allow us to feel sure he is not sneering at himself, its tone is not unworthy to speak to the most sacred recesses of the heart.

"Do we wish to apologise for Pen because he has got a white hat, and because his mourning for his mother is fainter? All the ...e of years, all the career of fortune, all the events of life, however

strongly they may move or eagerly excite him, never can remove that sainted image from his heart, or banish that blessed love from its sanctuary. If he yields to wrong, the dear eyes will look sadly upon him when he dares to meet them; if he does well, endures pain, or conquers temptation, the ever-present love will greet him, he knows, with approval and pity; if he falls, plead for him; if he suffers, cheer him;—be with him and accompany him always until death is past, and sorrow and sin are no more. Is this mere dreaming, or, on the part of an idle story-teller, useless moralising? May not the man of the world take his moment, too, to be grave and thoughtful? Ask of your own hearts and memories, brother and sister, if we do not live in the dead; and (to speak reverently) prove God by love?"

Is there in the range of fiction any thing more touching than the conception which took the shattered heart of the old Colonel to rest among the pensioners of Grey Friars?

Mr. Thackeray's pathos is good; but his humour is better, more original, more searching. He never rests in the simply ludicrous or absurd. Irony is the essence of his wit. His books are one strain of it. He plays with his own characters. In the simplest things they say the author himself gets a quiet backstroke at them. It is not enough for him to depict a man ridiculous, he makes him himself expose his own absurdities, and gathers a zest from the unconsciousness with which he does so. He treats his *dramatis personæ* as if he were playing off real men. His wit is not a plaything, but a weapon, and must cut something whenever it falls; it may be a goodnatured blow, but it must touch some one. He never fences against the wall. His satire is most bitter when he is most cool. He is skilful in the management of sneer and inuendo, and can strike a heavy blow with a light weapon. For his broadest absurdities he chooses the form of burlesque, and then he likes to have a definite something to parody. He is one who does not laugh at his own story. It is not often he makes his reader laugh; but he can do it if he will. Foker is the best of his more laughable creations. In general he is grave, composed, even sad, but he is never uninterested in the personal adventures he is engaged in narrating; his sympathies are always keenly alive, though often he prefers to conceal how they are enlisted. At bottom he has a warm, almost a passionate interest in his own creations. They are realities to him as to the rest of the world.

His peculiar powers must tempt him to personality, but in any open form of it he does not now indulge. The early days of Blackwood and Fraser are gone by. There was a time, however, when he gave "Sawedwadgeorgeearllittnbulwig" a very severe, though not ungenerous shaking; and when himself attacked by the *Times* he turned and bit fiercely and sharply. He

is apt to wear the forms of his wit to tatters. Jeames, with his peculiar dialect, in the *Yellowplush Papers* and elsewhere, was entertaining and instructive, but has been allowed to grow wearisome. Orthographical absurdity is an exhaustible subject of merriment, and Mr. Thackeray's wit is somewhat too much dependent on his nice appreciation of distinctions of pronunciation, and the slavish subserviency he compels from the art of spelling. He can mimic in print as well or better than Dickens. His sense of humour differs from that of the latter, however, in being almost exclusively called forth by the peculiarities of persons themselves, or personal relations. He very rarely is struck with the ludicrous in things alone, as Dickens often is; his description of Costigan's hairbrush, as "a wonderful and ancient piece," stands almost by itself; he rarely even makes fun out of a man's personal appearance, except so far as his dress or air indicate some mental trait or characteristic. The mode of his caricaturing, too, is quite different. Dickens collects all the absurdities and laughter-moving elements in a thing, and heaps them together in a new image of his own. Thackeray pictures the thing as it is, only bringing out its ludicrous or contemptible features into sharp relief.

His genius does not lead him to the poetic form; he has just that command of verse which one would expect from a man of his great ability; he can make an able use of it, and his power of language gives him great command of rhyme and sufficient facility. His verses are generally reproductions; free renderings from another language with new point and application, parodies or humorous narratives of actual incident. Among these the "Chronicle of the Drum" is the best. It is thoroughly French, dramatic, and spirit-stirring. "Jacob Homnium's Hoss" far surpasses all his other humorous efforts in verse. It will bear recalling; and we will quote it as a specimen at once of his rhyming powers, his dexterously ridiculous orthography, and his wit, for it is not easy to give a prose extract to exemplify the character of the latter. He is too good an artist to let it stand in lumps,—he uses it as the gilding of his whole narrative.

JACOB HOMNIUM'S HOSS.

A NEW PALLICE-COURT CHAUNT.

One sees in Viteall Yard,
  Vere pleacemen do resort,
A wenerable hinstitute,
  'Tis call'd the Pallis Court:
A gent as got his i on it;
  I think 'twill make some sport.

The natur of this Court
My hindignation riles:
A few fat legal spiders
Here sit & spin their viles;
To rob the town theyr privlege is,
In a hayrea of twelve miles.

The Judge of this year Court
Is a mellitary beak,
He knows no more of Lor
Than praps he does of Greek,
And prowides hisself a deputy
Because he cannot speak.

Four counsel in this Court—
Misnamed of Justice—sits;
These lawyers owes their places to
Their money, not their wits;
And there's six attornies under them,
As here their living gits.

These lawyers, six and four,
Was a livin at their ease,
A sendin of their writs abowt,
And droring in the fees,
When their erose a cirkimstance
As is like to make a breeze.

It now is some monce since,
A gent both good and trew
Possest an ansum oss vith vich
He didn know what to do:
Peraps he did not like the oss,
Peraps he was a scru.

This gentleman his oss
At Tattersall's did lodge;
There came a wulgar oss-dealer,
This gentleman's name did fodge,
And took the oss from Tattersall's:
Wasn that a artful dodge?

One day this gentleman's groom
This willain did spy out
A mounted on this oss,
A ridin him about;
"Get out of that there oss, you rogue,"
Speaks up the groom so stout.

The thief was cruel whex'd
To find hisself so pinn'd;
The oss began to whinny,
The honest groom he grinn'd;
And the raskle thief got off the oss,
And cut avay like vind.

And phansy with what joy
The master did regard
His dearly bluvd lost oss again
Trot in the stable yard!

Who was this master good
  Of whomb I makes these rhymes?
His name is Jacob Homnium, Exquire;
  And if *I'd* committed crimes,
Good Lord! I wouldn't ave that mann
  Attack me in the *Times!*

Now shortly after, the groomb
  His master's oss did take up,
There came a livery-man
  This gentleman to wake up;
And he handed in a little bill,
  Which hanger'd Mr. Jacob.

For two pound seventeen
  This livery-man eplied,
For the keep of Mr. Jacob's oss,
  Which the thief had took to ride.
"Do you see anythink green in me?"
  Mr. Jacob Homnium cried.

"Because a raskle chews
  My oss away to robb,
And goes tick at your Mews
  For seven-and-fifty bobb,
Shall *I* be call'd to pay?—It is
  A iniquitious Jobb."

Thus Mr. Jacob cut
  The conwasation short;
The livery-man went ome,
  Detummingd to ave sport,
And summingsd Jacob Homnium, Exquire,
  Into the Pallis Court.

Pore Jacob went to Court,
  A Counsel for to fix,
And choose a barrister out of the four,
  An attorney of the six;
And there he sor these men of Lor,
  And watch'd 'em at their tricks.

The dreadful day of trile
  In the Pallis Court did come;
The lawyers said their say,
  The Judge look'd wery glum,
And then the British Jury cast
  Pore Jacob Hom-ni-um.

O a weary day was that
  For Jacob to go through;
The debt was two seventeen
  (Which he no mor owed than you),
And then there was the plaintives costs,
  Eleven pound six and two.

And then there was his own,
  Which the lawyers they did fix
At the wery moderit figgar
  Of ten pound one and six.

Now Evins bless the Pallis Court,
And all its bold ver-dicks!

I cannot settingly tell
If Jacob swaw and cust,
At aving for to pay this sumb,
But I should think he must,
And av drawn a cheque for 24*l.* 4*s.* 8*d.*
With most igstreme disgust.

* * * *

His sense of beauty is warm and lively. If he had as much of the negative sense of good taste which discards the ugly and jarring elements as he has of the positive sense which detects and appreciates the beautiful, his works would be far pleasanter reading. He sees beauty every where; his love of it mingles with the affectionateness of his nature, and throws a softening grace over his pages, relieving a bitterness which without it would sometimes be scarcely sufferable. Though his genius leads him to deal with men, external nature has no light charms for him. He does not often paint landscape, but he can do so in brief exquisite touches. Most of us are familiar with some such a German scene as this:

"Pleasant Rhine gardens! Fair scenes of peace and sunshine; noble purple mountains, whose crests are reflected in the magnificent stream; who has ever seen you that has not a grateful memory of those scenes of friendly repose and beauty? To lay down the pen, and even to think of that beautiful Rhineland, makes one happy. At this time of summer-evening the cows are trooping down from the hills, lowing, and with their bells tinkling, to the old town, with its old moats, and gates, and spires, and chestnut-trees, with long blue shadows stretching over the grass; the sky and the river below flame in crimson and gold; and the moon is already out, looking pale towards the sunset. The sun sinks behind the great castle-crested mountains; the night falls suddenly; the river grows darker and darker; lights quiver in it from the windows in the old ramparts, and twinkle peacefully in the villages under the hills on the opposite shore."

Of his bad taste his works furnish only too abundant evidence. It was a happy idea to look at society from the footman's point of view; but a very little of that sort of fun suffices. And Mr. Thackeray does not scruple to surfeit us. We have rough Warrington's excellent authority for the assertion, that "Mrs. Flanagan the laundress, and Betty the housemaid, are not the company a gentleman should choose for permanent association;" and we are not surprised at that "most igstrorinary" burst of indignation with which Jeames's career draws to its close in the *Yellowplush Papers*.

The advantage of using such a mouthpiece, if it be an advan-

tage, is this, that it gives an opportunity of saying things more vulgar, biting, and personal, than a man's self-respect or shame would allow him to say out of his own mouth. It is a *quasi* shifting of the responsibility. But if we give Sheridan credit for his wit, we must give Thackeray credit for his vulgarity. This feature greatly disfigures his works, and shows itself not only in the gusto and ease with which he enters into the soul of a footman, but in a love of searching out and bringing into prominent view the more petty and ignoble sides of all things. We don't quarrel with a humorist for exposing the vulgar element in a vulgar man, and in taking all the fun he can out of it. Self-delineative dramatic vulgarity, used in moderation, is one of the fairest and readiest sources of laughter. What we quarrel with is vulgarity in the tone of the work; a charge for which it is not very easy to cite chapter and verse, as it is a thing which is felt by the instinct rather than detected by observation; but we will adduce one instance of the sort of thing we allude to. In the first volume of *The Newcomes* we are told how Warrington and Pendennis gave a little entertainment at the Temple, including among their guests little Rosey and her mother. It is a very pleasant charming picture, and the narrator speaks of the "merry songs and kind faces," the "happy old dingy chambers illuminated by youthful sunshine." What unhappy prompting, then, makes him drop this blot on his description: "I may say, without false modesty, that our little entertainment was most successful. The champagne was iced to a nicety. The ladies did not perceive *that our laundress, Mrs. Flanagan, was intoxicated very early in the afternoon.*" And before the end of the description we are not spared another allusion to "Mrs. Flanagan in a state of excitement." It is vulgar, surely, to mar the pure and pleasant impression of the scene with this image of the drunken laundress not only introduced, but insisted on.

Not from false taste, but from something deeper,—a warp in the very substance of his genius,—arises another unwelcome characteristic. *Vanity Fair* is the name, not of one, but of all Mr. Thackeray's books. The disappointment that waits upon human desires, whether in their fulfilment or their destruction, the emptiness of worldly things, the frailty of the affections, the sternness of fate, the hopelessness of endeavour, *vanitas vanitatum*,—these are his themes. The impression left by his books is that of weariness; the stimulants uphold you while you read; and then comes just such a reaction as if you had really mingled closely in the great world with no hopes or ambitions outside it; you feel the dust in your throat, the din and the babbling echo in your ears. Art may touch the deepest sources of passion: awe and grief and almost terror are as much within her province as laughter and calm;

she may shake the heart, and leave it quivering with emotions whose intensity partakes of pain; but to make it unsatisfied, restless, anxious,—this is not her province. To steep it in the turmoil, the harass, the perpetual shortcomings of actual life, may possibly be sometimes permissible. But this must only be for a brief period—it is a very exceptional source of excitement; and to drop the curtain and leave the mind jaded with small discontents, perplexed with unsolved difficulties, and saddened with the shortcomings of fruition,—this is to be false to the high and soothing influences of art, and to misuse the power she gives. Those old story-books show a deeper sense of her true province who marry a couple and tell us they lived happily till they died, than Mr. Thackeray, who cannot forbear from turning over one more page to show us the long-beloved and hardly-won Amelia scarcely sufficing to her husband, and who brings back the noble-hearted Laura to teach us that she cannot escape the consequences to her own demeanour and character of having married a man so far inferior to herself.

As a Moralist, his philosophy might be called a religious stoicism rooted in fatalism. The stoicism is patient and manly; kindly though melancholy. It is not a hardened endurance of adverse fate, so much as an unexamining inactive submission to the divine will. This temper pervades his writings, and he has sung its gentler mood in a sweet autumnal, not hopeless exactly but hope-ignoring, strain:

"We bow to Heaven, that will'd it so,
That darkly rules the fate of all;
That sends the respite or the blow,
That's free to give, or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and wit:
Who brought him to that mirth and state?
His betters, see, below him sit,
Or hunger hopeless at the gate.
Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel
To spurn the rags of Lazarus?
Come, brother, in that dust we'll kneel,
Confessing Heaven that ruled it thus.

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,
Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely kill'd;
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance,
And longing passion unfulfilled.
Amen! whatever fate be sent,
Pray God the heart may kindly glow,
Although the head with cares be bent,
And whitened with the winter snow.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will;
And bear it with an honest heart,

Who misses, or who wins the prize.
Go, lose or conquer as you can;
But if you fail, or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman."

His fatalism is connected with a strong sense of the powerlessness of the human will. He is a profound sceptic. Not a sceptic in religious conviction, or one who ignores devotional feeling,—far from it; but a sceptic of principles, of human will, of the power in man to ascertain his duties or direct his aims. He believes in God *out of the world.* He loves to represent man as tossing on the wild sea, driven to and fro by wind and waves, landing now on some shining fortunate isle, where the affections find happy rest, and now driven forth again into the night and storm; consoled and strengthened now and then by the bright gleams above him; dexterous with his helm to avoid or conquer the adverse elements; but destitute of all knowledge of navigation, and with no port to steer for and no compass to guide his course. Pleasure, he tells you, may and perhaps should be plucked while you are young; but he warns you the zest will fail; he warns you that gratified ambition will taste like ashes in the mouth, that fame is a delusion, that the affections, the sole good of life, are often helpless under the foot of adverse fortune, and neither so powerful nor so permanent as we dream; and he can only recommend you to enjoy honestly, to suffer bravely, and to wear a patient face. He speaks to you as one fellow-subject to another of the Prince of this world. He has no call to set things right, no prompting to examine into the remedy. His vocation is to show the time as it is, and especially where it is out of joint. His philosophy is to accept men and things as they are.

He is a very remarkable instance of the mode in which the force of the intellect affects the moral nature and convictions. We apprehend he never asked "why?" in his life, except perhaps to prove to another that he had no because. With a very strong sense of the obligation of moral truthfulness, and the profoundest respect for, and sympathy with, simplicity and straightforwardness of character, he has no interest in intellectual conclusions. He would never have felt sufficient interest to ask with Pilate, "What is truth?" Always occupied with moral symptoms, intently observing men, and deeply interested in their various modes of meeting the perplexities of life, he never attempts to decide a moral question. He rarely discusses one at all; and when he does so, he is studiously careful to avoid throwing his weight into either scale. Elsewhere ready enough to show in his proper person, he here shrinks anxiously out of sight. Sometimes he warns you expressly he will not be respon-

sible for what he is putting into the mouth of one of his characters; or more often he treats the subject like a shuttlecock, raps it to and fro between two dramatic disputants, and lets it fall in the middle for those to pick up who list.

From this form of mind springs, in great measure, that scepticism to which we have alluded. A writer can scarcely help being sceptical who sees all sides of a question, but has gathered no principles to help him to choose among them; who has no guiding rules to which to refer, and whose instincts alone prevent the field of his conscience from being an absolute chaos. Only by these instincts he tests the characters of men and the propriety of actions; and wherever they alone can serve as guides, they do so faithfully, for in him they are honest and noble.

The best possible exposition of this turn of mind is that which Mr. Thackeray has put into the mouth of Pendennis; and if, in spite of the quasi disclaimer of it, we take it as a more or less fair expression of the author's own spirit, it is because it accords closely with other marks of it scattered throughout his works.

"'A little while since, young one,' Warrington said, who had been listening to his friend's confessions neither without sympathy nor scorn, for his mood led him to indulge in both, 'you asked me why I remained out of the strife of the world, and looked on at the great labour of my neighbour without taking any part in the struggle? Why, what a mere dilettante you own yourself to be, in this confession of general scepticism, and what a listless spectator yourself! You are six-and-twenty years old, and as *blasé* as a rake of sixty. You neither hope much, nor care much, nor believe much. You doubt about other men as much as about yourself. Were it made of such *pococuranti* as you, the world would be intolerable; and I had rather live in a wilderness of monkeys, and listen to their chatter, than in a company of men who denied every thing.'

"'Were the world composed of Saint Bernards or Saint Dominics, it would be equally odious,' said Pen; 'and at the end of a few score years would cease to exist altogether. Would you have every man with his head shaved, and every woman in a cloister,—carrying out to the full the ascetic principle? Would you have conventicle-hymns twanging from every lane in every city in the world? Would you have all the birds of the forest sing one note and fly with one feather? You call me a sceptic because I acknowledge what *is;* and in acknowledging that, be it linnet or lark, or priest or parson; be it, I mean, any single one of the infinite varieties of the creatures of God (whose very name I would be understood to pronounce with reverence, and never to approach but with distant awe), I say that the study and acknowledgment of that variety amongst men especially increases our respect and wonder for the Creator, Commander, and Ordainer of all these minds, so different and yet so united,—meeting in a common adoration, and offering up, each according to his degree and means of approaching the Divine

centre, his acknowledgment of praise and worship, each singing (to recur to the bird-simile) his natural song.'

" 'And so, Arthur, the hymn of a saint, or the ode of a poet, or the chant of a Newgate thief, are all pretty much the same in your philosophy,' said George.

" 'Even that sneer could be answered were it to the point,' Pendennis replied; 'but it is not; and it could be replied to you, that even to the wretched outcry of the thief on the tree, the wisest and the best of all teachers we know of, the untiring Comforter and Consoler, promised a pitiful hearing and a certain hope. Hymns of saints! Odes of poets! who are we to measure the chances and opportunities, the means of doing, or even judging, right and wrong, awarded to men; and to establish the rule for meting out their punishments and rewards? We are as insolent and unthinking in judging of men's morals as of their intellects. We admire this man as being a great philosopher, and set down the other as a dullard, not knowing either, or the amount of truth in either, or being certain of the truth any where. We sing *Te Deum* for this hero who has won a battle, and *De profundis* for that other one who has broken out of prison, and has been caught afterwards by the policemen. Our measure of rewards and punishments is most partial and incomplete, absurdly inadequate, utterly worldly; and we wish to continue it into the next world. Into that next and awful world we strive to pursue men, and send after them our impotent party verdicts of condemnation or acquittal. We set up our paltry little rods to measure Heaven immeasurable, as if, in comparison to that, Newton's mind, or Pascal's, or Shakspeare's, was any loftier than mine; as if the ray which travels from the sun would reach me sooner than the man who blacks my boots. Measured by that altitude, the tallest and the smallest among us are so alike diminutive and pitifully base, that I say we should take no count of the calculation, and it is a meanness to reckon the difference.'

" 'Your figure fails there, Arthur,' said the other, better pleased; 'if even by common arithmetic we can multiply as we can reduce almost infinitely, the Great Reckoner must take count of all: and the small is not small, or the great great, to his infinity.'

" 'I don't call those calculations in question,' Arthur said; 'I only say that yours are incomplete and premature; false in consequence, and, by every operation, multiplying into wider error. I do not condemn the men who killed Socrates and damned Galileo. I say that they damned Galileo and killed Socrates.' * * * *

" In these speculations and confessions of Arthur, the reader may perhaps see allusions to questions which, no doubt, have occupied and discomposed himself, and which he may have answered by very different solutions to those come to by our friend. We are not pledging ourselves for the correctness of his opinions, which readers will please to consider are delivered dramatically, the writer being no more answerable for them, than for the sentiments uttered by any other character of the story: our endeavour is merely to follow out, in its progress, the development of the mind of a worldly and selfish, but not ungenerous

or unkind or truth-avoiding man. And it will be seen that the lamentable stage to which his logic at present has brought him, is one of general scepticism and sneering acquiescence in the world as it is; or if you like so to call it, a belief qualified with scorn in all things extant. The tastes and habits of such a man prevent him from being a boisterous demagogue, and his love of truth and dislike of cant keep him from advancing crude propositions, such as many loud reformers are constantly ready with; much more of uttering downright falsehoods in arguing questions or abusing opponents, which he would die or starve rather than use. It was not in our friend's nature to be able to utter certain lies; nor was he strong enough to protest against others, except with a polite sneer; his maxim being, that he owed obedience to all acts of parliament, as long as they were not repealed.

"And to what does this easy and sceptical life lead a man? Friend Arthur was a Sadducee, and the Baptist might be in the Wilderness shouting to the poor, who were listening with all their might and faith to the preacher's awful accents and denunciations of wrath or woe or salvation; and our friend the Sadducee would turn his sleek mule with a shrug and a smile from the crowd, and go home to the shade of his terrace, and muse over preacher and audience, and turn to his roll of Plato, or his pleasant Greek song-book babbling of honey and Hybla, and nymphs and fountains of love. To what, we say, does this scepticism lead? It leads a man to a shameful loneliness and selfishness, so to speak—the more shameful, because it is so good-humoured and conscienceless and serene. Conscience! What is conscience? Why accept remorse? What is public or private faith? Mythuses alike enveloped in enormous tradition. If, seeing and acknowledging the lies of the world, Arthur, as see them you can with only too fatal a clearness, you submit to them without any protest farther than a laugh: if, plunged yourself in easy sensuality, you allow the whole wretched world to pass groaning by you unmoved: if the fight for the truth is taking place, and all men of honour are on the ground armed on the one side or the other, and you alone are to lie on your balcony and smoke your pipe out of the noise and the danger,—you had better have died, or never have been at all, than such a sensual coward.

"'The truth, friend!' Arthur said, imperturbably; 'where is the truth? Show it me. That is the question between us. I see it on both sides. I see it in the Conservative side of the house, and amongst the Radicals, and even on the Ministerial benches. I see it in this man who worships by act of parliament, and is rewarded with a silk apron and five thousand a year; in that man, who, driven fatally by the remorseless logic of his creed, gives up every thing, friends, fame, dearest ties, closest vanities, the respect of an army of churchmen, the recognised position of a leader, and passes over, truth-impelled, to the enemy, in whose ranks he is ready to serve henceforth as a nameless private soldier:—I see the truth in that man, as I do in his brother, whose logic drives him to quite a different conclusion, and who, after having passed a life in vain endeavours to reconcile an irreconcilable book, flings it at last down in despair, and declares, with tearful eyes, and

hands up to heaven, his revolt and recantation. If the truth is with all these, why should I take side with any one of them? Some are called upon to preach: let them preach. Of these preachers there are somewhat too many, methinks, who fancy they have the gift. But we cannot all be parsons in church, that is clear. Some must sit silent, and listen, or go to sleep mayhap. Have we not all our duties? The head charity-boy blows the bellows; the master canes the other boys in the organ-loft; the clerk sings out Amen from the desk; and the beadle with the staff opens the door for his Reverence, who rustles in silk up to the cushion. I won't cane the boys, nay, or say Amen always, or act as the church's champion or warrior, in the shape of the beadle with the staff; but I will take off my hat in the place, and say my prayers there too, and shake hands with the clergyman as he steps on the grass outside. Don't I know that his being there is a compromise, and that he stands before me an act of parliament? That the church he occupies was built for other worship? That the Methodist chapel is next door; and that Bunyan the tinker is bawling out the tidings of damnation on the common hard by? Yes, I am a Sadducee; and I take things as I find them, and the world, and the acts of parliament of the world, as they are.'"

On which side is the author? On neither, or rather on both. He thinks Arthur very wrong, and is not sure he has not the best of the argument. *Pendennis* is throughout the least agreeable of Mr. Thackeray's fictions. A work more purposeless, or one in which all grounds of action and clements of judgment are more distorted and confused, it is scarcely possible to imagine. Arthur Pendennis is represented as a young man of warm impetuous feelings, a lively intellect, much self-conceit, and a natural selfishness of disposition fostered by early indulgence. The highest and sole attractive points in his character are a sense of honour and a capacity for love. In early youth he is carried away by an impetuous passion for an uneducated woman, whose beauty is her sole attraction. Forcibly weaned from his first devotion, he goes to college, where his sole ambition is for social display, and where he falls a victim to his vanity and weakness. Returning home, he idles away some time, entangling himself more or less with a clever wicked little flirt in the neighbourhood. He goes to London, takes to review-writing as a means of support, strives to write honestly; has written a novel, dresses it up for the public, publishes it, and gains a reputation by it; moves meanwhile, by the interest of his uncle—a thorough man of the world and of the clubs—among high circles of fashionable life, and loves to study them and all other forms of life; lives in every way—in earning his maintenance, in intellect, in emotion—from hand to mouth; has no ambition, no convictions, and is utterly destitute of any object in life and of any incitement to action beyond the

temporary requisitions or the chance stimulants of the day. And thus Mr. Thackeray moralises on his life:

"Was Pendennis becoming worldly, or only seeing the world, or both? and is a man very wrong for being after all only a man? Which is the most reasonable, and does his duty best: he who stands aloof from the struggle of life, calmly contemplating it, or he who descends to the ground, and takes his part in the contest? 'That philosopher,' Pen said, 'had held a great place amongst the leaders of the world, and enjoyed to the full what it had to give of rank and riches, renown and pleasure, who came, weary-hearted, out of it, and said that all was vanity and vexation of spirit. Many a teacher of those whom we reverence, and who steps out of his carriage up to his carved cathedral place, shakes his lawn ruffles over the velvet cushion, and cries out, that the whole struggle is an accursed one, and the works of the world are evil. Many a conscience-stricken mystic flies from it altogether, and shuts himself out from it within convent-walls (real or spiritual), whence he can only look up to the sky, and contemplate the heaven out of which there is no rest and no good.

"'But the earth, where our feet are, is the work of the same Power as the immeasurable blue yonder, in which the future lies into which we would peer. Who ordered toil as the condition of life, ordered weariness, ordered sickness, ordered poverty, failure, success—to this man a foremost place, to the other a nameless struggle with the crowd—to that a shameful fall, or paralysed limb, or sudden accident—to each some work upon the ground he stands on, until he is laid beneath it.' While they were talking, the dawn came shining through the windows of the room, and Pen threw them open to receive the fresh morning-air. 'Look, George,' said he; 'look and see the sun rise: he sees the labourer on his way a-field; the work-girl plying her poor needle; the lawyer at his desk, perhaps; the beauty smiling asleep upon her pillow of down; or the jaded reveller reeling to bed; or the fevered patient tossing on it; or the doctor watching by it, over the throes of the mother for the child that is to be born into the world:—to be born and to take his part in the suffering and struggling, the tears and laughter, the crime, remorse, love, folly, sorrow, rest.'"

Pendennis was decidedly becoming worldly, and was very far from being what every man ought to be, and what most men, let us hope, are in at least some higher degree than he was. But Mr. Thackeray must not argue as if we were in danger of charging him with worldliness because he went down into the battle of life and accepted his place among those conditions which the divine wisdom has appointed for the activity of man. It is not this that makes him worldly, but because he has no life and no interests above this struggle to ennoble and give a meaning to it. Because he floats down the stream aimless, and with no thought beyond the momentary excitements of the rapid course. Because he is utterly immersed in worldly interests and worldly enjoy-

ments; because his ends, as far as he can be said to have any, as well as his activity, are worldly. This is why we condemn Pendennis. Following this life, he comes accidentally across a charming little porter's daughter, who falls violently in love with him, and for whom he conceives a sudden passion. Not the man to marry thus, he rises superior to trifling with a temptation, and shows resolution and, what he is never indicated as wanting, generous and honourable impulse. Subsequently he consents to marry his old flirting little friend, for whom he has no love (as he honestly tells her), because she brings him wealth and a seat in Parliament. He finds that so dishonourable a condition is annexed to the acceptance of these advantages that he is bound to refuse them; but in doing so he will not break the engagement of honour which binds him to Blanche Amory, although he has discovered that the true leaning of his heart is towards Laura, his mother's ward, who has loved him from old times. The faithlessness of his *fiancée* rescues him, and allows him to marry her whom he really prefers. He does so, and the spirit of his life remains that which was before indicated. He continues a kind-hearted, conceited, clever, self-centered, sceptical man of this world purely. The history concludes with a few sentences, in which the author briefly vindicates it as being a picture in conformity with the actual arrangements of divine providence; and invites us, "knowing how mean the best of us is," to "give a hand of charity to Arthur Pendennis, with all his faults and shortcomings, who does not claim to be a hero, but only a man and a brother." We must be allowed to observe in passing, that though we dare not refuse the hand of charity to Mr. Pendennis, it costs a struggle to give it; and that any thing further, such as affection or respect, we are quite unable to feel. We have no wish to be intimate with him. We find him intensely disagreeable, ill-bred, and ostentatiously offensive. But this is purely a personal matter, and may be referred partly to envy of his superior talents, partly to disgust at his inordinate self-conceit. What we have to do with is the moral view taken by the author. It is characteristic that, while professing to lay bare the weaknesses and shortcomings of Pendennis's worldly life, he does not once touch the root of the matter, or indicate the true want of this wasted spirit. To a mind like Arthur's, which measures the emptiness of all worldly subjects of ambition, it is more than to any other essential that it should have some gleam of insight and some practical interest in the higher diviner life which embraces this. And Arthur, orthodox, church-going Christian as he no doubt is, is a practical atheist. With a pure and awful reverence for the manifestations of holiness in others, gazing on a woman praying as with the eyes of one justly banished from Paradise, and himself

not without pious impulses, he lives without God in the world. And if we were to lay our hand on the most deep-seated failing of Mr. Thackeray's works, we should find it, not in his sneers or in his contemptuous estimate of human nature, but in the low level on which the whole body of his creation stands, and in the narrow boundaries within which the whole is enclosed. We should have no quarrel with an artist who should paint the world as it is, ay, and in far truer colours than Mr. Thackeray dares to use; but then he must embrace the true scope of life, he must not ignore those higher connections from which alone it acquires a purpose, and reduce it to a medley fit only to move the laughter of fools and the tears and scorn of the wise. It is not enough to gaze on the varied conditions of man, and say, We accept them, they are manifestations of the divine will. One can almost imagine that the faith of an animal rises to this uninformed acceptance of the conditions of existence. To man it is granted to touch here and there the general clue of the divine purpose, and to hold ever by that thread which belongs to his individual soul; to him is given a modifying will, a power of choice, and an active energy; of him that highest of all things has been said, that he may be a fellow-worker with God. Even in the minutiæ of his daily life he may follow that service which is perfect freedom, and only not be a servant because he has the higher tenderer invitation to be a child. Is it answered, that these themes are too serious for the novelist, the entertainer of lighter hours, the comic-tale writer? Then we say, that as long as a writer confines himself to fragmentary sketches of life, to its superficial humours or sentiments, the answer is good; and that we have no objection whatever to take the entertainment at its full worth, and laugh gaily with Grimaldi in the pantomime or Mathews in the farce. But Mr. Thackeray never cultivated this sort of literature in spirit, though he may for a time have availed himself of its ordinary forms. His genius is too large, too penetrating, too grave to move in this sphere. He professes to paint human life; and he who does so, and who does not base his conception on that religious substructure which alone makes it other than shreds of flying dreams, is an incomplete artist and a false moralist. And Mr. Thackeray cannot be sheltered behind the assertion that a fitting reverence precludes the intermingling of religious ideas with light literature,—first, because what we ask for does not demand a constant presence of the religious element on the surface, or indeed that it should appear there at all,—only that the spirit of the work and the picture of life should recognise it as at the foundation, or even only not utterly lose sight of it as a fundamental element in the conception of this world; and secondly, because he does not scruple (and fitly, we think) reverently to

introduce the topic of religion, and to picture a humble spirit looking upwards for consolation and support;—because, while he includes the *sentiment*, he excludes the *realities* of religion, and has no place for those aspirations of the higher life, only to form the field for which, was this world he deals with created. And this further quarrel we have with Mr. Thackeray's picture—that he gives a worldly view of the world; that through sarcasm and satire there shines every where a real undue appreciation of worldly things—most, of those things he is most bitter against—money and rank; and above all, a debasing sensitiveness to the opinion of those around us, apart from any regard for them and independently of any respect for their judgment. He reads as if he had a consciousness in himself of too great an appreciation of these things, against which his moral indignation is always in arms, and to which his honesty compels him to give expression; as if the bitterness of his jests were founded on that temper the poet speaks of—

> "Out of that mood was born
> Self-scorn, and then laughter at that self-scorn."

Otherwise, by what strange distortion can a man of Mr. Thackeray's mind and heart have allowed himself to become absorbed in the contemplation of meanness and false shame and the world's low worship of mere worldly advantages? How can he have permitted so unpleasant a subject to grow on him till it has become the atmosphere of his thoughts? As Swift rakes in dirt, so Thackeray in meanness. He loves to anatomise its every form, to waylay and detect it at every corner, to turn it inside out, to descant on it, to conjugate it. He sees English society worshipping a golden and titled calf, and he angrily dashes down the image; but that is not enough; he grinds it to powder, and mingles it in every draught he gives us. We know there are these things in the world; but the question is, whether an author is well employed in constantly forcing them on our attention. All will agree that the less a man can be affected by them the better; we know these meannesses and basenesses are in our own natures; but the true way to deal with them is, looking upwards, to tread them under foot, not to go scraping about with our noses to the ground and taking credit for our humility and honesty when we lay them bare. They grow thick enough in our own soil and in our neighbours', if we choose to devote ourselves to the search. Any man will succeed in distorting and confusing his moral judgment, if he will but search long enough among his mixed motives to lay hold of the mean or selfish element, and do but give it attention enough when he has found it. Grant, if you will, that an element of self-interest mingles in all we do;

are we likely to lose it by always looking for it? Is there any thing less edifying than Mr. Thackeray's way of showing up the meannesses and mixed motives of our neighbours, and then turning sharply on his readers, crying, "You're as bad, I'm as bad, we are none of us better than our neighbours; allow me to continue to excoriate them"? The remedy for these failings is not in exposing and railing at them. It is in raising men out of the atmosphere of them. The highest and the surest escape is the same we spoke of before, as transmuting life by a divine alchemy from barrenness, emptiness, and vanity into a harvest-field of rich opportunities and a battle-field for high ambition. Just in the degree in which a man's secret soul is occupied by a life at once within and outside this life will the small vexations of life and the pettinesses of others and even of himself fail to trouble him; the more he can absorb himself in a loftier pursuit, the more heedlessly will he brush through the nettles which Mr. Thackeray will have us sit down in to examine.

But apart from these considerations, any vivid interests powerful enough thoroughly to occupy a man suffice to set him free from this morbid and one-sided scrutiny of himself and his neighbours. But Mr. Thackeray not only narrows the field of life—he ignores the main avenues which, within the boundaries of the world he describes, are available as an escape both from an unhealthy sensitiveness to the meanness around us and within us, and from that burdening ever-presence of self under which almost all his characters labour.

Wide as is his knowledge of men, he seems to have little acquaintance with affairs. He paints men almost entirely in their moments of relaxation. He never describes a man carried out of himself by strong practical aims and interests. He is unwilling to recognise, seems scarcely to believe, that men ever have disinterested motives, or can be deeply occupied by other things than the demands of the feelings or the exigencies of gaining a livelihood. He laughs to scorn the idea that a man in writing, for instance, can have any higher object than to gain a money reward. He will have it that writing is a trade, and that all the writer can aspire to in the way of lofty aims is to write honestly, and without false exaggeration of sentiment or wilful distortion of fact. And on this latter point he speaks strongly and well, and with a vivid consciousness of some of an author's most immediate sources of temptation. It is true, perhaps, that the art of letters has become unduly subservient to money gains, that even men of genius are apt to consider too closely not what their own conception of what is best and highest prompts them to, but what will tell best in securing a popular acceptance; and that they too often wait timidly and obsequiously on the pub-

lic taste of the day. Yet this spirit is not so universal as Mr. Thackeray would have us think. Letters still leave a man free to be true to himself and his art, as well as to the ordinary exigencies of honesty. Even if they did not, there are plenty of other careers in which a man may forget himself in devotion to something beyond him. And in the case of the painter, indeed, Mr. Thackeray can see that while the artist labours for bread, his very choice of his profession as a means of making bread shows his love for it, and that as he who preaches the Gospel may justly live by it, the fact that he lives by his art is by no means inconsistent with a conscious devotion to its own high ends, or with his finding in a pure love for it the truest and most powerful source of his activity. There is a charming passage in the *Newcomes* which shows how fully Mr. Thackeray can enter when he chooses into the joys, the consolations, and the absorption of art:

"The painter turned as he spoke; and the bright northern light which fell upon the sitter's head was intercepted, and lighted up his own as he addressed us. Out of that bright light looked his pale thoughtful face and long locks and eager brown eyes. The palette on his arm was a great shield painted of many colours: he carried his maul-stick and a sheaf of brushes along with it, the weapons of his glorious but harmless war. With these he achieves conquests, wherein none are wounded save the envious: with that he shelters him against how much idleness, ambition, temptation! Occupied over that consoling work, idle thoughts cannot gain the mastery over him; selfish wishes or desires are kept at bay. Art is truth; and truth is religion; and its study and practice a daily work of pious duty. What are the world's struggles, brawls, successes, to that calm recluse pursuing his calling? See, twinkling in the darkness round his chamber, numberless beautiful trophies of the graceful victories which he has won,—sweet flowers of fancy reared by him,—kind shapes of beauty which he has devised and moulded. The world enters into the artist's studio, and scornfully bids him a price for his genius, or makes dull pretence to admire it. What know you of his art? You cannot read the alphabet of that sacred book, good old Thomas Newcome!"

As a rule, however, the author of *Vanity Fair* never represents a man as taken out of himself, except in some instances by the passions or the affections which approach nearest to instincts. He produces his characters on the stage generally only in their hours of idleness or amusement; and though he may indicate external occupation, he never (save, perhaps, in the sketch of J. J.) indicates an absorbing external interest. All his characters are self-engrossed, most of them self-seeking. Of Pendennis he tells us openly, "ours, as the reader has possibly already discovered, is a selfish story, and almost every person, according to his

nature more or less generous than George, and according to the way of the world, as it seems to us, is occupied about Number One." The occasion which calls out this expression of conviction indicates the source from which it springs. No man can set too high a value on the affections, but too exclusive a one he easily may; and this, as we have before indicated, is Mr. Thackeray's danger. He sees that the purest passion, the strongest personal friendship, and still more, the holy instinct of maternal love,—which he so admires and reverences that he seems to approach the subject on bended knee,—have mingled in their very essence a tincture of self; and finding it here, it seems easy to him to assume that no province of human life can possibly be free from it. Whereas, in fact, the affections are the strongholds of self-occupancy. Warm feelings, devoted instincts of attachment, are but a blessed gift from heaven, a part of the granted *nature*, and in their action simply the indulgence of a delightful emotion. Through the intellect and the will is a man's escape from self; thought and action are the conditions of self-forgetfulness; and love only loses its element of self in active service for the beloved object. Brooding over an attachment is the gratification of the highest pleasurable instinct granted to man; it is not conscious self-seeking, it is self-gratification; to labour for the sake of love is at once to escape from self, and the reverse of self-seeking. And as the highest virtues have the deepest temptations by their side, perhaps the most devout soul is the most in danger of a subtle spirit of self-occupancy, and most needs a field of active service; and on the other hand, the conditions of life offer the easiest escape from self-occupation in proportion as they lie farther from the domain of sentiment—science more than art, and active life more than science; and that pursuit offers the least temptation to selfishness which affords a man the widest and most absorbing sphere of exertion in the interest of others. Government is the employment which gives a man the least excuse for being self-occupied, though no doubt it may present him with formidable temptations to gratify what selfishness he has. In his want of interest in the active concerns of life, and in his emotional and artistic nature, are probably to be found the grounds of Mr. Thackeray's belief in the universality of self-occupation, which by a want of intellectual discrimination he confounds with self-seeking or selfishness.

Some of Mr. Thackeray's lesser works are infused throughout with a genial kindly spirit; such are the *History of Mr. Samuel Titmarsh and the Great Hoggarty Diamond* (which it is pleasant to hear is a favourite with the author), and the *Kickleburys on the Rhine, Dr. Birch's School*, &c. In these, foibles are pleasantly touched with cheerful happy raillery, and a light, gay,

yet searching tone of ridicule, and a tender pleasing pathos, pervade the story: "the air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself;" the wit plays freshly and brightly, like the sun glittering through the green leaves on the wood-paths. But in the mass of his works the tendencies we have before spoken of give a dark and unpleasing ground to the whole picture; and on it he draws in strong black and white. His general view of English society is a very low and unrelieved one. It is a true but a strictly one-sided representation, selected partly for its amusing elements, partly from an unhappy idiosyncrasy of the author. An opposite picture might be drawn as flattering as this is satirical; and neither, of course, would be complete. On this stage move many figures fair and dark. The author's skill by no means forsakes him when he chooses to draw upon our love and admiration: Dobbin and Amelia, Warrington and Laura, and Helen; Lady Esmond, Colonel Newcome, and the sweet, placid, tear-worn, but somewhat shadowy image of Madame de Florac, rise up at once before the mind. But he puts such characters apart; they shine like glowworms, brightly, but with no influence in the surrounding darkness. They are in his world, but scarcely of it; they are never allowed to leaven his general conception of society. A lump of sugar here and there cannot soften the bitterness of the whole cake. It would be unjust, perhaps, to say that his genius is more at home in his darker portraitures; but they certainly gain an undue significance, if only from this, that they are always represented in their proper sphere of activity, where their whole cleverness and energy is brought into light, whereas his fairer characters are invariably those whose excellence consists in the goodness of their instincts and emotions, and, with the single exception of Colonel Esmond, no external field of any interest is found for them to occupy. It is unfortunate, too, that Mr. Thackeray finds the main sources of wit and amusement in the most close connection with some form of vice or wickedness. How often is his laughter spun out of baseness, and crime, and misery! Degrading selfishness, heathen worldliness, abandoned honour, broken oaths, dice, drunkenness, every form of viciousness but one are made the subjects of sparkling satire, witty jests, the universal charity of mockery, and scorn tempered by scepticism. The company of bad men and women in the world is not elevating. How can they be elevating made amusing in books? The "terrible death-chant of the contrite chimney-sweep," in which Sam Hall conveys the lesson of his example, enforced by maledictions, has a grim humour about it true enough,—might almost be said to be a work of genius; but we don't take our daughters to hear it sung. Wickedness has its funny side; but it grates on our ears to hear English ladies talking as they do

sometimes of "that charming wicked little Becky." We don't say that a vicious or even a degraded nature is not a fit subject for the artist,—no doubt it is; we do not say it is an unfit subject even for comedy; but we do say it ought not to be comically treated. We do maintain that there is a sin against good taste and right moral influence in mingling too intimately real vice and the ridiculous; they may be alternated, but not mixed, still less almost chemically combined, after Mr. Thackeray's fashion. You sap the force of moral resentment when, by smiling raillery or farcical laughter, you make tolerable the stern realities of sin. We know no book with so repulsive a contrast between the broad farce, almost buffoonery, of its form, and the hideous and utterly unrelieved baseness and wickedness of its subject-matter, as is exhibited in the history of "Mr. Deuceace," told in the characteristic orthography of "Jeames." Mr. Thackeray has in his heart an eager hatred of baseness and hypocrisy. It bursts out unmistakably sometimes. It is hidden, no doubt, under all his air of persiflage; but it is part of his art to preserve a mask of neutrality; and an occasional protest has no weight against the tone of universal toleration, and the bantering mood which shakes these glittering sparks of wit out of the devil's devices. Sin is fire; and Mr. Thackeray makes fireworks of it.

And not only the witty emblazonment is bad, the elaborate detail is bad; and this applies not alone to the descriptions of the more serious vices, but to the lesser meannesses which we have before mentioned as occupying so undue a space of Mr. Thackeray's attention. It can be good for none of us to mingle so pleasantly and so closely with old Sir Pitt Crawley, with Becky, with old Osborne, with Major Pendennis, or even his nephew, with Costigan, with Altamont, with Blanche, with Lord Steyne, with many of those snobs. It is bad for us to be constantly rubbed against vice or sin of any kind; and we do not know whether the constant minutiæ of selfishness, of weakness, of false ambition, of cringing meanness and vulgarity, are not more harmful than the details of murder and other violent crime. Ainsworth and Thackeray differ in this respect only in the greater refinement and reconditeness of the latter. Why do we condemn the French school of novels? Because of the danger and debasement which lie in familiarising the ideas they contain. If we rightly think Richardson's *Pamela* unfit reading on account of its prurient minute details of a seduction, may we not protest against some portions of Mr. Thackeray's works which bring us so unintermittingly in contact with other degrading weaknesses of our nature, accompanied by something of a similar zest in the author, which has great power to infect the reader? On Richardson's subject, we should not, in the present day,

tolerate such minuteness for an instant; on that matter we have an almost absurd apprehension of the dangers of infection. We not only avoid details, we shun the subject altogether: an author who means to be read must not come within a mile of it,—he must cripple his creations of character and his pictures of life in order to avoid it. Mr. Thackeray is fully aware of this; mere commercial self-preservation makes it necessary to hold aloof. But if the instinct which avoids familiarity with one particular form of vice and sinfulness be true, as we believe it to be, though overstrained, ought not the same instinct to apply in due proportion to other forms of vice and sinfulness?

It is no vindication of the dark tints of Mr. Thackeray's painting to say that base natures and low motives throng life itself, that it is not a Jenny and Jessamy world, and that we must all mix in it. The fact is, that a vast number of Mr. Thackeray's readers learn more of the soiled aspects of the world from his pages than from any experience of their own. And if it be said that these considerations would go too far in curtailing the range of art, we reply, that the author limits its range by the same considerations, but so as to incur a double evil; for while he cuts himself off from almost a whole side of human life in order to accommodate himself to modern taste and female readers, he certainly retains much which any but the world's standard of taste would willingly see excluded. Conventionally he is thoroughly unexceptionable. Practically his writings are too cramped for the indurated apprehensions of men who know the world; too tarnished for those who are unsophisticated, whether men, women, or children. A broad and lifelike picture of wickedness, even baseness, is not objected to. Iago and Blifil leave no stain on the mind; but incessant pottering over small meannesses bears the same relation to Shakespeare's and Fielding's treatment of this subject as, in another subject, Paul de Kock's novels do to *Tom Jones*. The most condensed illustration of this morbid tendency is republished from the *Comic Almanac* in the first volume of Mr. Thackeray's *Miscellanies*,—the "Fatal Boots." It is the cleverest piece of irony since *Jonathan Wild*, and perhaps the most subtle and complete delineation of an utterly base and selfish nature ever written. It is more painful and humiliating reading than *Jonathan Wild;* because the greater crimes of the latter remove him further from us, and because he is distinguished by some power of intellect and force of character utterly denied to the abject Stubbs, whose autobiography reads like the smell of bad cabbages.

It is the evil of all satire, that it depends for its force upon a minute and vivid delineation of faults and vices which it never is advantageous to drag into light. Its only useful sphere is

personality. It is not often that personal satire is defensible; but in that, or the near approaches to it, is the only practical and possibly advantageous exercise of the art. You can make one man feel the lash, and direct a storm of indignation against him which may punish him or terrify him into a new course. And so it is possible to attack effectively a small class, or an opinion or course of action, which admits of practical change or abandonment. You may satirise General Simpson or the *Times*, and possibly produce an effect, though it is not probable; you may satirise the Palace Court, the peace-party, or the conduct of the war, and it may be with a result: but you cannot scourge abstract vices; you cannot hope to be practically employed when you satirise hypocrisy, or mammon-worship, or false adulation of rank, or the worldly estimate of temporal advantages which results in wretched marriages or selfish singleness. For one who learns from Mr. Thackeray to amend a folly of his own, how many will gain a sharper insight into those of their friends! And to none of our tendencies does Mr. Thackeray minister so effectively as to this. His social satire is fair and honest, "strikes no foul blow," as he himself says of it; but it is so searching, so minute, deals with such real incident of every-day occurrence, that it forms a sort of public gossip. It is a treasury of general observation, out of which to make particular applications. It gives us an insight we never had before into the weaknesses of our neighbours, makes us rich in new sources of contempt, and indicates clearly the channels of false shame. We can test our friends' daily life by it, and cry, "Isn't that like Mrs. Kewsy?" and "The very way the Portmans go on."

As a set-off against these unpleasing elements in Mr. Thackeray's writings, there is one whole side of his genius which casts a pure and pleasant sunshine over his pages. He has a heart as deep and kind as ever wrote itself in fiction. His feelings are warm and impetuous, his nature honest, truthful, honourable. Against cruelty, against baseness, against treachery, his indignation flames out quick and sudden, like a scorching fire. With what is manly, frank, and noble, he has a native inborn sympathy. If his sense of the ludicrous, and his wit, are too often nourished upon wickedness and depravity, he is familiar with another and truer connection, and has an exquisite felicity and moving power in the mingling of humour and pathos. If his works as a whole want purpose and depth, and clearness of moral conviction, if they accept sin simply as part of what is, instead of as a departure from what should be, yet they preach throughout lessons of example more telling than precept, and enclose many and many a passage well fitted to stir the spirit and to move the heart. If his wicked and mean creations are too pre-

dominant and too detailed, he has some at least whose great goodness and white purity relieve by fair gleams the dark and clouded landscape. They are emotional characters: but are not these the very ones which practically take the strongest hold on our affections; and the errors of impulse those which, however long the preacher may preach, we shall always the most readily excuse? Who ever painted a manly generous boy with so free and loving a pencil as the author of *Dr. Birch's School*, of Champion Major, and of young Clive Newcome? Who else has that fine touch that can picture us so delicately and so clearly the fresh innocence of girlhood, the tender passion of a loving woman, or the absorbing devotion of a mother? Who can trace in firmer strokes fidelity and courage and temperate endurance in a man? In every page, alternating with bitterness, and sometimes an unsparing cruelty of sarcasm, there shines out a kindly affectionate nature, soft compassion, and humble reverence. It is as if his nature, like his writings, were full of strongly-contrasted elements, lying closely side by side. Whatever his defects,—and they are great,—he must always take his stand as one of the masters of English fiction; inferior to Fielding, because he wants his breadth and range, the freeness of his air, and the soundness of his moral healthfulness; but his rival in accuracy of insight and vigour of imagination; and perhaps, as we have before said, more than his rival in fertility. And since Fielding's time, though characters have been drawn more complete than any one of Mr. Thackeray's, no fiction has been written in the school to which his imagination belongs which can bear a moment's comparison with *Vanity Fair*. This is hitherto his masterpiece, and will probably always remain so. There is a *vis* in it greater than in any of his other works—the lines are more sharply, deeply cut, the whole more marked with the signs of special and peculiar genius. Our pleasure in it alternates vividly with dislike—almost repulsion; but our admiration is compelled by all parts of it, and our eagerest sympathy by some. Dobbin and Amelia will always remain living inmates of the English mind. They have both of them, Amelia especially, had much injustice done them by their author; but as their images lie longer in our breasts, and we meditate upon them, the sneers and inuendoes fade away, and we see them undefaced, and recognise that Dobbin's devotion was not selfishness, and Amelia's characteristic tenderness not weakness. Just as with living people small obscurations and accidents fall away, and we estimate the whole character better in absence, so it is with these: we know them better, and love them more trustfully in memory than on the actual page. Thackeray's genius is in many respects not unlike that of Goethe; and such

another woman as Amelia has not been drawn since Margaret in *Faust*.

Of his other great works, *Pendennis* is the richest in character and incident, and the least pleasing; the *Newcomes* the most humane, but less vigorous and concentrated than any of the others; *Esmond*—the later parts at least—by far the best and noblest. We have no temptation to discuss the merits of its imitative style and scenery, observing only that though a modern mind shines through the external coat, yet probably no other man could have gathered so many minute and characteristic indicia of the times of which he writes, and so artfully have blended them together. It is as a tale we look at it; and though to most men such a subject, so treated, would have afforded more than ordinary temptations to an overloading of character with costume and external detail, with Mr. Thackeray the reverse is the case. He is freed from his devotion to the petty satire of modern conventions, and has fewer calls for the exercise of small contempts. The main characters, Esmond, his mistress, and Beatrix, are the ablest he has drawn; they are not less vivid than his others, and more complete. Esmond is strong, vigorous, noble, finely executed as well as conceived, and his weakness springs from the strength of a generous and impulsive nature. He is no exception to the observation that Mr. Thackeray never endows a hero with principles of action. Esmond is true to persons, not to ideas of right or duty. His virtue is fidelity, not conscientiousness. Beatrix is perhaps the finest picture of splendid, lustrous, physical beauty ever given to the world. It shines down every woman that poet or painter ever drew. Helen of Greece,

> "Fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars,"

is the only one who approaches her. And both her character and that of her mother are master-pieces of poetical insight; the latter blemished, however, here and there with the author's unconquerable hankering to lay his finger on a blot. He must search it out, and give it at least its due blackness. He will not leave you to gather that it must be there,—he parades it to the day, and presses it to your reluctant eyes. It comes partly from the truthfulness of his nature, which cannot bear that a weakness should be concealed, and partly probably from a mistaken apprehension of the truth that the artist must be true to nature. There was a time when a good deal of parade was made and some very diluted philosophy spun out of the distinction between "the true" and "the real." But this simple fact there is, that a man may be true to nature and yet depart from all her mani-

fested forms; and that it is a higher striving to be faithful to such an inborn conception than to mutilate and distort it for the sake of finding room in it for certain observed facts. Mr. Thackeray sometimes does this, oftener he does what is quite as unpleasing. When in a character, especially a woman's, he comes upon a defect, he does not allow it to speak itself, or show itself naturally, and sink with its own proper significance into the reader's mind. He rushes in as author, seizes on it, and holds it up with sadness or triumph: "See," he says, "this is what you find in the best women." Thus he gives it an undue importance and vividness, and troubles and distorts the true impression of the whole character.

In the same spirit he lays hold of the petty dishonesties and shams of social life. Almost all these have their origin in vanity, and in its hasty and habitual gratification the meanness of the devices is overlooked, at any rate not often wilfully adopted with a consciousness of its presence. Such contrivances are follies of a bad kind; but to stigmatise them as deliberate hypocrisies is to give a very false significance to the worst ingredient in them.

In the *Newcomes* "the elements are kindlier mixed" than in any of the other fictions; there is a great softening of tone, a larger predominance is given to feeling over sarcasm. As before, the book is a transcript from life; but the life is more pleasantly selected, and the baser ingredients not scattered with so lavish a hand. If the execution be somewhat inferior, as perhaps it is, the characters of Clive and Ethel less clearly and vividly defined than we have by long use to high excellence begun to think we have a right to expect they should be, and the former unattractive in his feebleness, if the journey through the story be rather *langweilig*, sometimes from over-detail, sometimes from long and superficial moralisings over the sins of society,—yet there is much to reconcile us to these shortcomings in exchange, in some greater respite from the accustomed sneer. We have said before that the genius of Thackeray has many analogies to that of Goethe. He is like him, not only in his mode of depicting characters as they live, instead of reproducing their depths and entirety from the conception of a penetrative imagination, but also in his patient and tolerant acceptance of all existing phenomena, and his shrinking not merely from moral judgment but from moral estimate. The avoidance of the former, springs in Thackeray from kindly feeling, from the just and humble sense we all should have that our own demerits make it unseemly for us to ascend the judgment-chair, and from a wide appreciation of the variety and obscurity of men's real motives of action; the latter, a very different thing, springs from this same wide insight,

which makes the task more than ordinarily difficult, especially to an intellect not framed to take pleasure in general conclusions, and from his imagination being one which does not naturally conceive in separate wholes, and most of all from an insufficient sense of the duty incumbent on us all to form determinate estimates of the characters and moral incidents around us, if only to form the landmarks and bearings for our own conduct in life. These features remain in the *Newcomes*. There is the same want of ballasting thought, the same see-saw between cynicism and sentiment, the same suspension of moral judgment. The indignant impulse prompts the lash, and the hand at once delivers it; while the mind hangs back, doubts its justice, and sums up after execution with an appeal to our charity on the score of the undecipherable motives of human action, the heart's universal power of self-deception, and the urgency of fate and circumstance.

Art. VIII.—FOREIGN POLICY AND THE NEXT CAMPAIGN.

General Treaty of Congress, signed at Vienna, June 9, 1815; *with the three Annexes thereto, relating to the Kingdom of Poland and the Republic of Cracow.* Presented to the House of Commons by her Majesty's command, in pursuance of their Address of the 8th February 1847.

Correspondence between Viscount Castlereagh (late Marquis of Londonderry) and the Emperor Alexander of Russia, respecting the Kingdom of Poland. Vienna, October, November, 1814. Presented to the House of Commons, February 1847.

Papers relative to the Suppression, by the Governments of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, of the free State of Cracow, and to the Annexation of that State to the Austrian Empire. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, February 1847.

Correspondence respecting the Relations between Greece and Turkey. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1854.

Eastern Papers. Part XIV. *Negociation at Vienna.* Presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1855.

Geschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts seit den Wiener Verträgen. Von G. G. Gervinus. Erster Band. Leipzig, 1855.

The Polish Question, from the German Point of View. By a German Statesman. Translated from the German. London, Ridgway. 1855.

The "happy new year" prayed for to-day by millions of affectionate voices,—may God copiously send it into private homes, where so much remains sheltered from the world's storms! In

public affairs it is more than can be expected; and to exchange such a wish in the family of States would imply a levity and delusion secure of disappointment. At the opening of 1856 Europe knows that the holiday-mood must be short, and the welcome to the fresh time graver than its wont. Stern duties await it; sharp sufferings impend over the months; unforeseen complications cannot fail to arise; and never was there a time when clear commanding purpose was more needful in our statesmen,—purpose flexible enough to take up the exigencies of the hour, but unbending in its general direction. Dearth of the chief necessaries of life, a falling scale of wages, a rising rate of discount, the European spread of speculative finance, the need of loans by every body at once, growls from Washington, insolence from Naples, snares from Vienna, plots at Athens, the permanent ban of the Pope on one ally, and the periodic shots of assassins at another,—are omens serious enough to make wise men anxious, and to fill the irresolute with dismay. None of these things move us, however, in comparison with one all-pervading doubt, which adds a darkness to them all: have we public men to lead us with honour through?—men who see their way, and mean to hold to it; who, having shaped the nation's best instincts into well-defined conviction, will prevent popular fickleness by constancy in themselves; men in whose hands the character of England and the menaced interests of Europe are really safe? This miserable doubt has settled with a fixed depression on the spirit of the country. Banished for a moment by happy words at Romsey, it is brought back by sinister overtures to Knowsley; forgotten in the excitement of the morning's telegraph, it returns at night with some "four-point" rumour from Vienna or Berlin. Nor does this painful feeling merely express a personal estimate of this or that cabinet-minister or political leader; though it would find perhaps excuse enough in the shifting parts of last year's drama at St. Stephen's. The distrust is chronic, and has a deeper seat. It is impossible to follow men who cease to lead, and put faith in those who have no faith themselves; and it has become the habit and accomplishment of public men to substitute the feeling of the country for their own; to dispense with positive convictions, and calculate instead the pressures of the hour; to determine the right by merely assuming the inevitable. It was the fatal merit of Sir Robert Peel to leave this type of political morality as a heritage to his successors. Thrice compelled to surrender to the force of national opinion, and frankly accepting it as a decree of nature, he acquired a matchless tact in yielding; he consecrated the virtue of legislative acquiescence; he identified statesmanship with the art of discriminating between ripe and unripe social wants. The

admiration felt for his later career has raised this narrow and imperfect conception into the Englishman's very ideal of political wisdom; giving it a prominence far greater, it is probable, than it had in his own mind. No doubt it is of the utmost moment to read aright the indications of matured opinion, to avoid protracted resistance to an irreversible national will, and pronounce the verdict when the hearing has fairly closed. The institutions of a country are thus kept in permanent harmony with its life, and escape the danger incurred either by their own inertia or by the pedantry of *doctrinaire* politicians. Yet, after all, this is but the negative side of government. We cannot consent to reduce it thus to a mere registering-machine for jotting down the wishes of the hour, and forming the diary of a people's humours. Let the popular sentiment act freely on the statesman; but if he does not powerfully react on the popular sentiment, and mould the very opinion which he obeys, he is unworthy to occupy his higher point of view:

> "Celsâ sedet Æolus arce
> Sceptra tenens, mollitque animos, et temperat iras."

But, according to our modern doctrine, the political Æolus is but paid clerk to the national anemometer; his cave of the winds, a snug office in Downing Street; and his business, to supply paper for the wriggling lines of the outside breeze, and keep the pencils pointed that are broken by jerks of storm. The opinions prevalent in a free country are surely not to be treated as a *destiny*, on which the minister has but to wait; they are, to an extent little suspected, an undetermined power that waits for him. True, a host of other causes is ever impressing a certain direction on the mind of a people; but among them all there is no influence more steadily intense than the earnest expression, by trusted leaders, of a clear political creed and noble public aims. To abdicate this function, to leave it in the state to which the last five-and-twenty years have reduced it, amounts to a confession of unfaithfulness or incapacity. A few weeks ago a candidate for the suffrages of an Irish constituency, in responding to public curiosity as to his political principles, replied, "Just what you please, gentlemen."* Perhaps he intended to parody the pliant policy which he emulated only too well.

If in relation to *home* questions there is some plea for the helpless sequaciousness of our statesmen, they cannot be excused

* "You will naturally feel anxious to know what particular line of politics I shall advocate, in the event of your choosing me for your representative. My answer is plain,—*Whatever you please.* Although a Catholic in religion, yet I am not bound by the Church; and you have only to direct me how I will [sic] act, and I shall endeavour to advocate your interests."—*Address of Mr. C. Fitzgerald Higgins to the Constituency of Armagh.*

from the duty of directly forming and frankly leading the public sentiment on *foreign* affairs. Here, for the most part, they have it all their own way. Their councils are unembarrassed by any predetermination in the national will; and if their hands are weak, it is not from excess, but from defect in the "pressure from without." It is Lord Palmerston's own remark, that "one of the chief difficulties in foreign affairs which are felt in this country is due to the circumstance of the great bulk of the people having cared, generally, little about them." And if it be so, *who* is to blame? Are the English people, by some fatality of nature, incurious of the world's affairs? or doomed, by insular position, to a blind selfishness? or so pleasantly asleep on their own liberties, that no cries of wrong or alarm of advancing tyrannies can wake them? Such reproaches may be pardoned when flung at us from Kossuth's embittered and scornful spirit; but an English minister should know that opportunity has never been given us in vain to acknowledge our international obligations and venture something for truth and justice in other lands. Queen Elizabeth had no occasion to complain that her people knew nothing of the Netherlands, and were without opinions about Spain. Cromwell found in a vigorous policy abroad his best support amid dangers at home. Islands and stations in every sea,—not won by colonisation only, but the award of treaty or the prize of war—Gibraltar, Jamaica, Malta,—attest the habitual participation of this country in all great European movements. How, indeed, is it possible that a people with possessions in every habitable latitude of both hemispheres, with kindred and commerce in every civilised land, with the exiles of every continental convulsion living on their shores,—should be indifferent to "foreign affairs?" We feel precisely as much interest about them as our rulers choose to invite;—intense in crises of conflict like the present, when sacrifices are needed and publicity is inevitable; relaxing in peaceful times, when controversies are removed from the battle-ground to the diplomatic desk, and the guardians of the "public service," freed from immediate dependence on the national spirit, relapse into mystery and silence. A sustained interest in foreign affairs requires a sustained knowledge: and this it has never been the habit or inclination of statesmen to keep up in parliament or the country. The fitful temper of the public mind has faithfully responded to their alternations of confidence and reserve; and as soon as they feel it their duty to hold us wide-awake to the course of external politics as it proceeds, instead of coming down upon us three or four times in a century for a sudden verdict on all the arrears, we are convinced that the last "difficulty" to be felt will be that of general apathy. As it is, our English habit of

government indemnifies itself for yieldingness in home affairs by uncommunicative independence in foreign policy. Imperial confidences, secret correspondence, Olmütz meetings, take place; the most important reports stream in from our ambassadors or consuls-general, mutual engagements distinctly affecting the future of Europe are covertly taken by foreign states;—and unless some stray whisper reaches the sensitive ear of stock-brokers and "own correspondents," the facts first come to light a year or two after they have passed from diplomacy into history. We are far from attributing this to any official selfishness or treachery; far from wishing to see a parliamentary usurpation of the executive. We have less fear of un-English compromise, and of failure in political vigilance from the statesmen of any party, than from the middle-class multitude of the House of Commons; and believe that no instrument of government is so good as a reasonable *trust* reposed by parliament in the advisers it has given to the crown. But this trust, to be reasonable and free from caprice, must be *intelligent*. The management of international relations must cease to be an occult art. The minister must actively contribute from the materials in his custody to the formation of a sound public opinion, and the maintenance of a lively national interest in foreign affairs. Let his rule be to tell all that he fairly may, instead of only what he absolutely must. Let him rely for support, not on his ability to outwit bewildered country-gentlemen, and alight upon his feet however rudely tossed in the Yorkshire blanket of a peace-debate, but on the clear judgment of a country prepared and instructed by himself, and the open-eyed assent of a parliament not wholly left to the "light of nature" for its notions of the boundaries, races, religions, the recent history, alliances, and treaties, of all states beyond a vacation-trip. Had it been an established usage for the Secretary of Foreign Affairs to take leave of every session of parliament with a survey of external relations, we believe that, at the outbreak of the present war, the government would have seen its own way more clearly, have had a better understanding with the country, and been spared the distrusts and desertions which have so much paralysed its action.

The second year of the war is over; and with it ought to pass away the mere tentative conduct of it, which is permissible, even inevitable, in its first stage. The time has come when it must cease to be a mere military struggle, and must be taken possession of and directed by a comprehensive *policy*. And that policy ought to be a *new one*, computed, not on the necessities of 1815, but on the living conditions of our own generation, and the manifest requirements of the opening time. It is vain to urge that the *status quo ante*, or the four points, because once

accepted as sufficient *preventives* of war, ought to content us as its *issue*. Such pedantic ethics not only disregard the lessons of historical experience, but would secure to us all the curses of conflict without a hope or a compensation. The dissension of states is, in its very essence, their transition from one state of equilibrium to another; it attests the worn-out condition of the old adjustment; it is the tempestuous prayer of nations for a better;—and to advise relapse into the proved instability, and bar the search after any truer centre of repose, is to insure disturbance in perpetuity; it is to open the furrows of the present only to fling in dragons' teeth for the future. What is the use of the last forty years' experience, if it has not proved to us that the Treaty of Vienna secures no balance, but a monstrous overweight to the rudest, least scrupulous, steadiest, and most grasping power in Europe? What lesson have we learned from the chancery of St. Petersburg, if we still trust to its Cretan veracity, and look only to a revision of its moral guarantees? What are we the better for the 6000 guns and captured stores of Sebastopol, if we yet imagine that the Mediterranean is safe, and that no Byzantine empire can retrace its steps to Rome? Unless France and England are weak enough to believe "in the paramount destinies of Russia," it is their duty to address themselves to the whole problem of her overweening power, and direct the war towards its preconceived solution. This involves no abandonment of the original definite objects of the contest, no attempt at a universal re-settlement of Europe; but only a final clearance of illusions, a firmer grasp of the real conditions, and a resolute seizure of the most efficient resources.

It may be admitted that Lord Aberdeen was unjustly blamed for seeking in the first instance the alliance of Prussia and Austria. In resisting an aggression on the public law of Europe, all the great Powers have the same ostensible interest; and the partners to its establishment are the natural partners for its defence. There cannot be a doubt about the general rule, that a contumacious member of the family of states should be brought to reason by the joint action of all the rest. And however reasonable the suspicion may be, that the appeal for co-operation will, in certain instances, be made in vain, the duty remains of at least presenting the opportunity, and throwing the responsibility of refusal on the evasive states. It would have been an unpardonable error to force Vienna into union with St. Petersburg by presuming her unwillingness to take a better course, and overlooking her intense interest in the preservation of the general peace. Nor is it justifiable to break away at once from the existing bases and combinations on which the European equipoise has depended, till by every fair experiment their inadequacy has been proved.

It was necessary to try whether the engagements and habits of common understanding, established at the commencement of the peace, would still avail for its protection against new dangers. The time and forbearance spent in working out the answer have not been lost. The demonstration is complete. No one henceforth will expect from Austria any thing but the most direct self-preservation; she believes in Mr. Cobden's creed, and simply minds her own business,—reduces her military establishments, and lets the world's right and wrong find their "natural level," without bias from her to their "free competition." In the political exigencies of the new time, in the problem now opening on half the globe, the German governments disclaim all interest. They have no objection to have it settled for them; but the particular turn of the solution is a matter of indifference. To them it would be equally agreeable to see the Czar abated to a style of less oppressive patronage, or France pale and harmless from loss of blood, and England's civil freedom overmatched by the model despotism of the world. We know, then, precisely what the chance of their alliance is worth. Against a *common* danger to the system of which they are parts, it is nothing at all; and, to render it available, the scene must be laid nearer home. The first effect of their neutrality was to keep the war at a distance; the second should be to bring it to their frontier-posts.

In fact, the political combinations of 1815 were established with one view; those which we now want must take their form from another. *Then* it was the France of the Revolution, of the Consulate, of the Empire, against which precautions or penalties were taken; *now* it is the Russia of 1853 from whose encroachments protection is sought. It would be strange if the barrier thrown up to face the West were equally efficient to shield us on the East. The alliances natural then among fellow-sufferers in the general danger and comrades in the same field, have become in many ways unnatural now, under the changes of the interval and the exigencies of the hour. Besides the one great difference that France and Russia have changed places, and the protector of 1812 appears as the aggressor of 1853, the events of 1848 have altered the affinities of Europe, and awakened in the Western nations sympathies and antipathies which statesmen cannot permanently neglect. The fact cannot be disputed, that, beyond the ranks of professional politicians, Englishmen of all parties look with aversion on every form of Austrian alliance, and feel it an infinite relief to be delivered from the chance of so questionable a partnership. So strong and general is this shrinking, that we are convinced the spirit of the country would not long support any enterprise into which the double-eagle imported its black omen. Geographical position and political antecedents, however,

imposed the necessity of overtures now happily declined. Austria, on her eastern outposts, has the option of a plain duty or a public crime; she must either accept the office of guarding Europe against Muscovite encroachment, or become accomplice in the guilt. She has chosen the latter course, and is entitled to no further consideration. We are not insensible to the strength of her temptation and the manifold difficulties of her position. But if they mitigate the sentence on her unfaithfulness, it is only by enhancing the sense of her incapacity. She cannot do the duty of a frontier state. She is next neighbour to the world's great danger; and can only wheedle and coax it to keep still. She wants her army for her subjects, and has only intrigues and professions for her rivals and allies. Living in the memory of mankind chiefly by the reformations she has quenched and the kingdoms she has ruined, and representing to the imagination of to-day little else than a sleeping mass of bigotry, bankruptcy, and insurrection, she can bring us only the infection of distrust and hopelessness; and, of all the larger states, has the most certainly precarious and diminishing stake in that future of Europe for which we are called to provide.

We have, then, done, and overdone, our duty to the old Castlereagh combination, and are fairly free of Hapsburg trammels. In looking out for new alliances, it is to be hoped that regard will be had to the natural genius of our people and the manifest calling of the western and northern nations. It is in vain that statesmen of the old school deprecate a "war of principles;" and, relying on material interests and moral indifference, group the most heterogeneous states together in the same political bond. In such arrangements, as there is nothing spontaneous, there is nothing self-sustaining, nothing durable. They differ from a true adjustment as a railway-board from a family; the one united for an outward business, the other in the inner life. The sense of a common peril, or the indignation at a common wrong, may, no doubt, band together for a time the most incongruous elements;—it only needs that they be human. Of this kind is our connection with the Turks; founded on the accident of their station at the *propylæum* of the civilised world, and morally confirmed by just anger at the treatment they have received, it is nevertheless unsupported by the slightest social affinity, and could exist only in the presence of a threatening alternative. In the higher antipathies that inspire our resistance to Muscovite advance Constantinople has no share. We avail ourselves of its people's instinct of self-preservation for ends that look far beyond their probable term of existence in Europe. Of this kind, we trust, is *not* our connection with Sardinia. Recommended, no doubt, by a joint interest in the freedom of the Mediterranean,

it has a far deeper significance; and by expressing a sympathy of social development in addition to mere partnership of external defence, awakens a sentiment of pride and promise out of all proportion to its material weight. Such states it is that can best help each other,—most efficiently, most cheaply for themselves, most nobly for the world. These invisible and ideal ties, twined into the very heart of nations with living fibres of mutual respect and common admirations, are worth whole fleets and armies,—nay, will create whole fleets and armies, which no joint-stock political company could raise. A country indeed that has come to disclaim all preference and passion, that represents nothing but itself, that acknowledges no trust, that hangs neutral amid the sweep of contending enthusiasms, and only stops its ears until the storm be past, is but a withered member on the organism of humanity, whether lingering to dwindle or hastening to be struck off. The instinctive consciousness of some special function to perform,—a function identified with its very essence,—is to a people as the pulse of life, and may be found in instances most remote from our own approval. Even the rudeness of Russia feels the stirring of an *idea*. She is the champion of the Greek Church against the heterodox and infidel. The Austrian house inherited the dream of the "Holy Roman Empire,"—to defend western Christendom against the Saracens. Spain took her vow to Catholicism against the Protestants; the Low Countries and Sweden to Protestantism against the Catholics. With powers moved by such inner springs, we believe that scarcely any advantage of material resource will enable a people without faith, or governments blind to its force, permanently to contend. We admit the difficulty of applying this general doctrine to the particular conjuncture at which we stand. We feel the want of any definite rallying-cry like that which united and divided states in the days of Gustavus Adolphus. We know not how to shape into expression the latent faith and feeling which give a distinctive character to the temper of our own country or of any other. It is an age of indeterminate and composite tendencies, of aspirations suppressed and disguised. But this only complicates the problem, without removing it, or rendering its solution of less momentous consequence. The elective affinities of human societies, even where they defy statement and analysis, remain; and with or without our recognition will actually determine the future. Nor are we, after all, so much at a loss for a "cause" as we are apt to imagine; so much more indefinitely placed than the forerunners—in the sixteenth century, for instance—whose course now seems quite sharply marked out and easy to see, though severe to follow. There was no "side" for the Reformers to take until they shaped and formed it for

themselves,—no "Protestantism" for Saxony and Zürich to support till Luther and Zwingle created it. That age, too, like the present, had its dim and doubtful dawning of new consciousness; alive with groping sympathies, drawn to this, repelled from that, ere yet any outline of traceable conviction defined the sunrise and proclaimed the day. It is precisely by fidelity to incipient intimations of higher truth and good, by tampering with no moral disgust, by opening the heart freely to young nobleness and keeping up no visiting acquaintance with hoary lies, that little by little a faith grows up, a principle is disengaged to view, and the standard is raised which assembles the army of the future. Of what elements in Europe that army would be naturally composed may be surmised by help of certain signs and instincts of the time.

Over the greater part of the European continent two very marked phenomena must strike every observer who can compare the opposite extremities of five-and-twenty years; viz. the dependence of social order on *great armies*, and the increasing power of *organised priesthoods*. High military doctrine and high church doctrine are in the ascendant from Königsberg to Messina, from Normandy to Kherson. Could we enumerate all the cities and provinces which, at different times within the last ten years, have been declared under "state of siege," the list would be an astonishing one, and would run, we believe, through every country except the Netherlands and Sweden. Yet there has been no foreign war, with the exception of the short affair that closed with the battle of Novara; the outlay for ordnance-stores has been every where for home consumption. Even Louis Philippe,—the commercial traveller of kings,—went into the *fortification-line*, and thought it a prudent *investment*. The Austrian rule lives virtually *encamped* on a great portion of its territory, and administers from head-quarters. Italy is a series of garrisons. The King of Prussia decorates his officers and flatters his priests, and calls honest members of parliament (among them Vincke himself) "his enemies!" In most foreign governments the army is less an external protection than a domestic institution; and their Horse-guards and Home-office are pretty much the same. Still more remarkable,—indeed portentous,—is the advance of the *clerical* power. Even in Protestant Germany it threatens at once civil rights and scientific theology; it chokes the healthy ventilation of thought; sickens the upper atmosphere with perfumes of pietistic cant and ecclesiastical arrogance; and burdens the whole spirit of society. Hopeless and even ludicrous as the attempt may seem to institute a hierarchy and high-priesthood under the genial, human, unsystematic Luther, men are found to perpetrate such

absurdity in his name; and in a recent work of Dr. Kliefoth of Schwerin, which is perhaps the completest manifesto of this ascendant party, we find the whole theory of the Hildebrandic system developed,—reduced indeed to provincial dimensions, but unflinchingly applied to the relations and problems of the hour. Human life would be unbearable under the conditions of ecclesiastical police which he proposes to inflict. Yet this doctrine triumphs; it passes from speculation into action; and every year adds to the number of parishes surrendered to it. We refer incredulous readers, who fancy all danger to religious liberty a thing of impossible recurrence, to the excellent letters of Bunsen (now in course of publication) on freedom of conscience and the rights of the Christian people:* and they will find that jurists of highest name are not ashamed to expound the most servile doctrine; and that no important affair of life—education, marriage, worship, study—is secure from the invasion of spiritual ambition. If these are the phenomena most conspicuous around the birthplace of the Reformation, the tendency of Roman Catholic Europe has spoken plainly enough in the new Austrian Concordat; in which the "indelible character" of the Vatican vindicates its existence, and the genius of the Hapsburg family reasserts its unhappy mixture of tender scruples towards moping monkery with insensibility to the most gigantic civil crimes. Does Lord John Russell,—the captivated plenipotentiary of Vienna,—believe his Protestant eyes, as they glide over that unctuous document? Is it for *this* that he has been so faithful to the principles by which his family acquired "the Bedford-level;" that he has so long preached and practised the doctrine of "civil and religious liberty;" that he wrote the Durham letter; that he lectured about persecution and Galileo at Exeter Hall; that he frequented evangelic and apocalyptic Dr. Cumming;—to see the widest western empire, under his bewitching friend Count Buol, swept clear of toleration,—the schools, the universities, the press, surrendered to the bishops, and the bishops responsible to Rome,—the regulars above the seculars,—the canon law above the civil,—marriage and divorce, the family and the inheritance, submitted to priestly jurisdiction? And that which Austria is, a great part of the Continent tends to become,—a Theocracy intrenching itself in a Camp. Standing armies and standing priesthoods, approaching from opposite sides, drive the civil franchises upon an ever-narrowing ground. The two extreme agencies, which should be reserved as the ruler's exceptional resource, are passing into the ordinary means

* Die Zeichen der Zeit. Briefe an Freunde über die Gewissensfreiheit und das Recht der christlichen Gemeinde. Von Christian Carl Josias Bunsen. 1es und 2es Bändchen. Leipzig, 1855. Brockhaus.

of government. The Genius of supernatural pretension and the twin Giant of material force recognise each other, and advance to the greeting, across the noble field of the healthful natural life; spoiling beneath their tread the free strolling-grounds of happier years, and driving the herd of frightened nations to be crushed between their embrace.

Of these alarming tendencies, we need not say Russia is the very incarnation; the Czar uniting virtually in his own person the attributes of pontiff and autocrat at once. England, on the other hand, presents the natural counterpoise to Russia in this as in so many more obvious respects. Nowhere are the soldier and the priest so completely dispensed with in the work of government as with us. In no other land could the whole army be emptied out without making the slightest difference in the public security and peace. Nowhere do Law and Conscience so nearly blend, and render each other such mutual support. Nowhere is it so impossible to exercise religious oppression; and if ever tried, the attempt must come from private intolerance, while the protection is interposed by public law. Our very life as a nation is bound up with that free worship, free discussion, free teaching, free commerce, which elsewhere are objects of official consternation: the instruments of revolution elsewhere are the conditions of self-sustaining order here. The hieratic distemper which abroad loads an empire with a Concordat can here only irritate a churchwarden with credence-tables and altar-petticoats. In short, we have a faith in natural justice, in social self-government, in religious liberty, in eventual truth, and a jealousy of the surplice except to instruct, and of the sword except to defend us, which are pre-eminently characteristic of us as a people. This national genius is not to be denied its field of external action. It is *a trust* to be guarded for the world, and in times of conflict to serve as a rallying-point of sympathy where kindred tendencies may find support. It ought to have a potential voice in the selection of our alliances. And if this principle of natural affinity is not permitted to take direction of the very next campaign, the most serious anxieties for the political future of Europe will be justified.

Tried by this test, our alliance with Imperial France is not without its drawbacks and insecurities. The throne of our ally is as little independent of military and sacerdotal support as that of Francis Joseph himself; and guards itself not less jealously from the free usages to which we are attached. It cannot be denied, that whatever, as Englishmen, we must consider the noblest and most hopeful elements of Gallican society, are depressed or alienated under the present *régime*. The reformed religion dare not lift up its head; political discussion is extinct; the moral

sciences cannot breathe in the altered air; and the vivid life of literature and art is replaced by ecclesiastical, martial, and industrial *spectacle.* The prætorian rule that occupies the Tuileries may be a political necessity; but it is not a necessity that can gratify the aspirations of patriotic Frenchmen, or be acceptable to the real sympathies of our own people. We can quite understand the effect upon our American cousins of our close alliance with a government so little realising their hereditary dream of Gallic freedom. Just when they are most disappointed in that Paris which, as republican children of the old world, they have regarded as the very Delphi of their faith,—the *μέσον ὀμφαλὸν εὐδένδροιο ματέρος*,—they find us drawn to it by closer attraction than had seemed possible before. Their dislike of such a phenomenon is perfectly natural in their position, and corresponds with a part of the mixed and more balanced feeling prevailing here. Are we, then, to repent of our neighbour's alliance, or to hold lightly by it? Far from it: it is the prime condition of the whole enterprise in which we are engaged, and is to be maintained with scrupulous good temper and good faith. But let us not forget France herself in her Court: let us cultivate a good understanding with the enduring nation, rather than with the precarious *τυραννὶς* of the hour. So far are the two things from being incompatible, that the very policy which is best for the friendship of the countries is, we are convinced, best also for the security of the Emperor's throne: while conversely, unless we speak to other sentiments in France than those which are special to the present *régime,* unless we strike with our ally into a new path, the success of the war, the durability of the alliance, and the continuance of his rule, all become precarious together. The time has arrived when mere military excitement, without a deeper political interest, will fail to maintain the spirit of either country under the sacrifices entailed by the conflict. In France the national feeling has throughout been less energetically roused than in England; and the real secret of the popular sentiment here lies in a vague hope, which it is dangerous longer to disappoint, that the allied powers would finally get rid of Russia as a perpetual menace to the West. If that hope be absurd,—if the "paramount destinies" are to be quoted against it,—a deceptive war must soon languish into a sullen peace. But if not, let the confidence of the nation be justified by a bold cut right into the political pith of the whole question, instead of mere military trimming of the extremities.

The enemies of Lord Palmerston have long prophesied that, as soon as the Crimea was in the hands of the allies, terms would be accepted; because, a new field of operations having then to

be sought, it would be impossible longer to avoid an invasion of Poland,—a measure which, being really efficient, he would never adopt. We do not share in this distrust; but we cannot shut our eyes to the mischievous plausibility given to it by the present aspect of events. Since the fall of Sebastopol nothing has been done in the peninsula; and the intentions of the generals have *twice*, it is believed, been arrested by orders from home What answer can be given to the complaint, that the opportunities of a fine autumn have been taken out of the hands of the commanders-in-chief? In immediate sequence on this apparent provision for consuming more time in the Crimea come sinister tidings of new Austrian proposals, said to be favourably entertained in London and Paris, yet presumed at Vienna to be so certainly acceptable to Russia, that already the reduction of the Austrian army to its peace-establishment is taking place. If the offered concessions are small,—the mere twaddle of "the four points" over again,—to listen to them is evidence of anxiety in Downing Street *to avoid the next step*. If they are ample,—involving adequate cession of territory as well as promises about creeds and ships,—the tender of them shows how much Russia shrinks from the allies' next step. In the latter case, peace may be irrecusable; but it will be unsatisfactory, because arresting us in a European duty on the eve of its most effectual performance. In the former case, the havoc which the war has made with the reputations of public men will be complete; and the melancholy impression will become fixed, of a hopeless irresolution or insincerity in the whole class of official statesmen. We know that such impressions may easily be unjust under the complications of *allied* action and deliberation. But they are not the less natural or the less mischievous. And for the constitutional future of this country, for the permanent understanding with France, as well as for the ulterior prospects of Europe, we think it will be unfortunate should winter negotiations come in arrest of the next campaign.

For how is it possible any longer to evade the one simple, direct, practical solution of the whole Russian difficulty,—the restoration of Poland? The hour has come which brings this question legitimately, and in due course of business, on to the table of our council-chamber. Effort enough, and more than enough, has been made to restore the disturbed balance by means of the old forces, and to extort from Austria and Prussia the performance of their duty as frontier-states towards the acknowledged aggressor. They decline the trust, and release Europe from its delusive confidence. Every ingenuity has been exhausted to keep "the nationalities" asleep, to carry on the contest at a distance from every explosive land, and coldly to

repulse the zeal of "dangerous allies." Why longer cripple our strength, that we may spare the weakness, and leave unpunished the past crimes of our enemy, and of the neutrals that are more his than ours? Why starve our enterprise of all moral enthusiasm, by proclaiming that it shall take every circuit to avoid doing a great justice, and rather storm every barricaded path of material force than pronounce the word of Right? Is it not *the fact*, that *the post of barrier-state is vacant?* Then let us declare it so, and see whether there is not a people to fill it. Do you doubt whether there are Poles in Poland?—whether Lord Dudley Stuart did not for the most part bring them to London, and make them tiresome to your charity? Have you been assured at the clubs and in the *salons* that the Lithuanians worship the Czar, that the Volhynian peasantry are happier than ever before, that the country has been glad to forget its history and forego its aspirations? It is easy to put this doctrine to a better test than the assertion of Austrian fashionables and Prussian officials, on which alone it rests. Land an army near the Gulf of Riga, and another at Odessa or Otschakov; and having secured the coasts as a base, advance along the lines of the great rivers with Polish regiments and the national standards in the van; let the one expedition be under French, the other under English command; and after the first great battle, north and south, the problem will find its spontaneous solution, whether in Poland the allies are on a hostile soil, and are received on their march as invaders or as liberators. How but by such experiment,—an exigency of war in 1856, an impossibility in the peace before and after,—can it be known whether the conditions of a restored nationality remain? Where the question is, "What life yet burns in a race so long oppressed?" testimony is worthless, diplomacy is sceptical, discussion has no data; the people themselves, in the languor and inertia of to-day, know nothing of the spirit that may wake in them to-morrow, when new hopes surprise them, and "native music" and historic banners appeal to them again. From the nature of the case, the reality will not confess itself to any commission of inquiry; it will yield itself up only to the interrogation of fact. The Western Governments find themselves at the very crisis for putting the question: if they shrink from it, will it be through fear of its failure, or through fear of its success?

Thus to enter upon a new stage of the war would be at once to ennoble our alliance with France and to cast all our European relations into more natural shape. The resuscitation of Poland not only belongs essentially to the Napoleonic policy, and simply carries out the measures of 1806 and 1809; but deeply touches the sympathies of the French people, who have never permitted the hopes of her exiles to pine away. If it be true

that, under the pressure of great wants and scarce supplies, our neighbours' martial zeal has grown precarious, their Emperor has but to pronounce the word "Warsaw," and the elastic spirit will return, and carry him on flood-tide over every bar of finance that could impede his way. Nor could any thing so strengthen the ties between the allied countries as their union in a positive and constructive, as well as a mere negative and preventive enterprise,—their joint committal to a bold and magnanimous policy, generous to one European people and protective to all. Of all the parties that have reigned in Paris during the last thirty years—Legitimist, Orleanist, Republican, Bonapartist,—the first alone is indifferent to the fate of Poland; nor can any political interest be named that awakens in France so little dissension and rests on so broad a base of public support. It is a noble feature in the character of the French nation, that, while still unable to work out their own social problem, they have ever sympathised with foreign struggles of patriotism, and been quick to pity the exiles of defeated liberty. If, as we believe, this is the deepest and most pervading of all high impulses in our neighbours, to call it into healthy action is their best preparation for dealing with their own interior difficulties,—the happiest moral gymnastic to fill the interregnum of their constitutional existence. When the time shall come to resume their civic life, they will stand before Europe as liberators of others even when not free themselves,—as having accepted indeed a dictator, but one who could interpret their generous inspirations, and was not afraid to ask them for honourable sacrifices. If he would obliterate painful recollections, and provide a future worthy of ambition; and if we are to be in alliance with the soundest, choicest, most abiding elements of his nation,—we must take the mutual pledge to a new political creation on the plains of the Dwina and the Dnieper.

Yet not a creation, but a resurrection. And here lies the peculiarity of the present complication, that the direct way out of it is by a path not revolutionary, but conservative; not cut by military pioneers through the forest of an impenetrable future, but known and trodden as the highway of history. You have not to carve out with the sword a conventional state without physical or moral landmarks, and insulting to every preconception of political or ethnological unity. You have not, like the first Napoleon, to make new surveys, and to cover the walls of your foreign-office with maps bewildering to last season's geography. You have but to take Spruner's *Historic Atlas*, and turn the leaves *backward* till you have rid yourself of the great Muscovite upstart, and left his innovations and ὑπόμνήματα behind; and there, with tints of the past upon it

to separate it from the Russian waste beyond, lies the very map that you may send to your political engraver. From the Carpathians to the sources of the Wolga, and spanning Europe from the Black Sea to the Baltic, spreads a region that for centuries has been a realm; that was so within living memory; that has a common language and proud traditions to unite its parts, and a western Christianity to separate it from the domains of the Greek church on the east and south;—that has, for its area, nearly five times the population and produce of the rest of European Russia; and supplies to its usurper's army, now in the field against you, 300,000 soldiers, with the greater part of the horses, the grain, the hemp, the hides, that mount and feed and equip them. The mode in which this land was stripped of its independence is kept in remembrance by universal abhorrence, and is admitted by all parties,—yes, even by the minor accomplices themselves,—to be unique in enormity among political crimes. Frederick the Great assures us that "it was the empress Catherine who proposed the partition. I know," he adds, "that Europe generally believes that the partition of Poland was a consequence of political intrigues imputed to me. However, this is utterly false. After I had proposed divers intermediate measures, it became necessary to have recourse to the partition as the sole measure that could prevent general war. Appearances are deceptive; yet it is by these that the public judge. That which I here say to you is as true as the forty-eighth proposition of Euclid." Maria Theresa pronounced the act to which she gave her reluctant signature to be not only a great blot upon her reign, but so contrary to all right, that a just Providence would assuredly avenge it on succeeding times. And even Russia, though her empress at the moment was incapable of compunction, has thought it decent to have a little remorse at a safe distance. In 1806, Alexander said to some Polish generals: "The partition of Poland is a great injustice. Had I been on the throne at that period, I would never have consented to it." At the congress of Vienna, the sincerity of this profession was put to the test. The Duchy of Warsaw having been restored to its independence by Napoleon, the leading statesmen of the allied powers,—Talleyrand, Castlereagh, Metternich, Stein, Hardenberg, Knesebeck,—concurred in urging the re-establishment of Poland, as an indispensable security to Europe. The Emperor Alexander, however, insisted on taking the kingdom to himself and occupying its throne; only to be merged on the first colourable pretext into a province of his empire. Lord Castlereagh vainly endeavoured to change Alexander's resolution; and the correspondence between them manifests so strongly the alarm of the allies at the Russian pretensions, and exhibits,

on the emperor's side, an hypocrisy and rapacity so odious, that, were it not for the confusion of the Elba-escape and the hundred days, the concession ultimately made with so much weakness to so much wickedness would be utterly inexplicable. The clearness with which the German statesmen saw the danger of yielding to the Russian demands may be judged by the following impressive words of Knesebeck,—a man, be it observed, who detested the Poles with true Prussian intensity:

"The future expects from us that we should consolidate that which the exigencies of the times has produced. The common interests now felt by Europe must be preserved, guaranteed, strengthened for the future. . . . Picture to yourself the Turks driven out of Europe;—what would be the result? Either Russia would establish herself in the country, or a separate Greek empire would be founded there. Now, is it desirable, either to render Russia more powerful even than she is at present, and to have to cope with the colossus on that side also, or to found a Greek state, which the influence of Russia, as regards religion, commerce, and other relations, would soon transform into a Russian colony? . . . If Poland be not re-partitioned between the conterminous countries, such as it was in 1805, there are but two alternatives open for that country: either it must become a *Russian province* or an *independent state.* In the latter case, the power of Austria and Prussia will counterbalance that of the new state; and though its possessions may form a topographical projection of their territory, this will not be more dangerous to them than if those countries belonged *to a state even beforehand stronger than they.* One hundred thousand Poles stationed near Lenczyc may be counterbalanced by one hundred and twenty thousand Prussians collected near Posen or Bromberg; but five hundred thousand Russians stationed near Lenczyc would blow up the Prussian monarchy. As regards the first of these suppositions, the position of the Polish territories would be disagreeable and annoying to Prussia; as regards the second, the position of the Russian territories *threatens the very existence, destroys the independence of Prussia.* One may submit to the first; *in presence of the second life loses its value!* . . . Where an interest of such magnitude is concerned, the gain of a few square miles of territory or of a few thalers of revenue ought not to be taken into consideration. . . . Austria and Prussia have no reason to fear the Poles taking the offensive. . . . The Carpathian Mountains form the true frontiers of Austria. . . . Prussia would attain her object if she were to advance from the Druenca to the Vistula. The safety of the states therefore requires that care be taken *to re-establish Poland in her integrity,* with the exception of the territories necessary for our security; that is to say, that sincere

and energetic endeavours should be made to form Poland again *into a separate state, into an independent state, governed by sovereigns who shall occupy no other throne.* Should Russia refuse to consent to the integral restoration of Poland, her plans of universal empire will become patent, the liberty of Europe will be threatened from this side, and another war for the purpose of saving the independence of the other states will not be far distant."*

That war is upon us to-day; and the mistake as well as the guilt of the extinction of Poland is admitted on all sides. With a rare unanimity, politicians of every class—Lords Lyndhurst and Harrowby, Sir R. Peel and Mr. Roebuck—concur here in their verdict; and there is every where a ready-made feeling and preconception to which, in times of difficulty, it is the statesman's highest advantage to be able to appeal. A policy in reversal of a great crime is in itself a power; and a minister who shapes into action the public remorse of forty years, and arms himself with the recorded indignation of the civilised world, is master of priceless elements of success. Why should France and England forego this moral superiority? They have carefully retained it in their possession, through the intervening period, by protest against the annexation in 1830 and the suppression of the Republic of Cracow in 1846. It is irreproachably theirs to use whenever occasion arises; and their statesmen must know that now, if ever, the hour strikes.

Nor do we believe the *right* to re-establish the old military frontier of Germany to be embarrassed by any insuperable *difficulty*. You want to be secure from the aggressive designs of St. Petersburg. The very nation which, with Hungary and Venice, long garrisoned eastern Europe against the Ottoman advance, still lives upon the soil, and is ready for the same duty against a new barbarism. It is easy to *desire* and *imagine* a better protection, to complain of the responsibility of re-creating it, and to draw pictures of possible failure. But where is the practical measure of protection comparable with this in facility and completeness? Will you be content with dismantling the maritime fortresses of the Czar, and keeping his war-ships under water? His power is not naval, but continental; and it is by land that he will win the coasts of the Archipelago and the North Sea. Will you find your trusty police in the vigour of Turkey? or in the good faith and power of Austria? Will you set up the Principalities to keep watch and ward for you? It has already exceeded all the resources of your diplomacy and arms to save them from a double invasion and every curse permitted by the indulgence of a Vienna war-office. Besides, is it easier to consolidate a new people, or to bid

* The Polish Question from the German Point of View, p. 28.

an old one rise from its oppression and live again? Nations are not made in a day, or extinguished in a generation; but, in spite of energetic protocols, clean or dusty, remain for you a weakness or a power according to laws of God that are never moth-eaten. If the Western Powers, releasing themselves and each other from their original disclaimer of territorial designs, were to plant themselves on the Euxine, they would expose themselves to the charge of selfish aggrandisement and uncalled-for harshness towards a vanquished foe. In short, whilst Russia protrudes with her choicest provinces into the midst of Europe, with her grasping right hand suspended over Prussia and her left over Austria, holding both in permanent asphyxia, it is vain to seek for any real arrest of her great game. It is a visible check-mate; and play as you will the little pawns that are scattered on the board, they must all be knocked off in turn, and the stake be lost.

On the other hand, let Poland be once interposed between Europe and the Muscovite, and hold its line of posts from sea to sea; and there is scarcely a continental question that is not simplified, or a small progressive state that does not receive a new value in the scale. No remark is more common and less wise than that the German states, being the most deeply interested in dangers from the east, ought to take the lead in any reconstruction of Poland and resistance to Russia. Precisely because their interest is so intense, their participation is impossible. They are paralysed by their dependent position, and cannot take the initiative in a move which nevertheless they would gladly see accomplished. They took their slices of Polish territory against their own convictions, and because otherwise Russia would have seized the whole; and, to be delivered from contact with their terrible patron, they would readily give them back, with some slight and unimportant exception. The pamphlet of "the German Statesman" discusses this question most ably, and shows that the courts of Vienna and Berlin have far stronger grounds than in 1815 for desiring to see a sovereign state at Warsaw; and are not likely tenaciously to withhold the contribution of their Polish provinces, if the sacrifice be reasonably compensated, and do not include the Dantzic littoral connecting East Prussia with West. Indeed, the German question would be thus disencumbered from an entanglement which, had there been no other difficulty, would have sufficed in 1848 to prevent its solution. No nationality is more intolerant of foreign elements than the Teutonic; and the determination of Austria to be admitted *integrally* into the projected German unity, bringing all her non-German subjects with her, was one main topic of hopeless dissension at the Frankfort assembly; while the duplicity of Prussia, in first commencing and then cancelling the separate organisation of Posen, embroiled

the proceedings from another side. "What to do with the Poles," was the provoking problem that broke in upon the game and marred it; bringing Russian threats to bear upon the deliberation, and with their dull pressure finally wear out the paroxysm of German enthusiasm. Had Poland existed as an independent state, the experiment at Frankfort would have been sheltered from the disturbance of St. Petersburg, and cleared from an obtrusive foreign element that gave it an artificial complexity. The non-existence of Poland is the vassalage of Germany.

The effect of a restoration on the Vistula would no doubt be to alter the present balance between the two great German states. Prussia, compensated for the loss of Posen at the expense of a few mediatised grand-dukes, would gain, not only in compactness, but in influence, by becoming *purely German*. Her political risks would be diminished; her probable future aggrandised. Austria, on the other hand, is, in the first place, less easy to compensate for the surrender of Galicia; and, in the next, is brought, by the reappearance of Poland, visibly nearer to the dangers that always menace her empire. A free nation on one side of the Carpathians cannot coexist with a suppressed people on the other: Vienna will not proceed far in the "assimilation of Hungary" in the face of an independent Warsaw. Indeed, we are astonished that this consideration did not occur to the "German Statesman" as fatal to his proposal that the *Principalities* be given as the equivalent for Galicia: provinces which a successful rising in Hungary would wholly cut off from communication with the rest of the empire, would be but insecure payment for the recognition of a free Poland. Western Europe will never consent, we trust, to prejudice the Hungarian cause by surrendering the Siebenbürgen to the Austrian embrace, and perpetuating the tyranny that now wantons at Bucharest and Jassy. It is time that the Viennese empire be stopped in its progress eastwards,—be cut off from Russian contact,—and be brought within the salutary influence of Western opinion and civilised rivalries. So devoutly Catholic a state is unfit to govern countries of Greek or mixed religions; and we would rather see her extension further *up* the Danube than further *down*. Old as her evil ways are, we should not despair of amendment, did she act as a purely South-German power, from her own hereditary states as a centre. At all events, indemnification for Galicia must be so devised as rather to consolidate Germany than to distribute Austria.

If the restoration of Poland is a step towards German unity on the one hand, and towards Hungarian independence on the other, it releases the Danubian provinces from Muscovite in-

trigues and periodic foreign occupation. Moldavia, lying between Hungary and Poland, Wallachia between Hungary and Turkey, would be able to develop their resources, and wield their institutions, undisturbed by the presence of aggressive states. There seems no urgent call for any change in their old relations to the Porte, which were faulty chiefly from sources of weakness and interference which would then be cut off. The three states, —Poland, Hungary, Turkey,—historically trained to common action in various combinations, would form natural allies; and each one of them having a separate and deepest grudge against Russia, their union, secured not less by moral than by material interests, would effectually bar the advance of a Tartar power upon Europe. It is the fashion with diplomatists of the conventional school to profess reliance on Austria as holding the Eastern Protectorate of the Continent. But except among sexagenarian statesmen and their blind followers, we venture to say there is not a well-informed politician in Europe who does not know the vanity of this reliance, and feel perfectly assured that the real alternative for the civilised world is, to succumb to "the paramount destinies," or to establish the cordon of free states. Whatever may ultimately become of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, the fate of Constantinople is, by their creation, rescued from prejudgment, and detached from the reversionary legacies of Peter the Great. Time is thus secured for the undisturbed operation of natural causes, political and ethnological, in the East; and the problem, removed from the presence of a dictatorial coercion, and surrounded by new and healthier conditions, cannot fail to receive a less fatal solution than we should otherwise apprehend. By that time Italy will be something more, we trust, than "a geographical expression;" and the Mediterranean, no longer surrounded by one power and many weaknesses, will have escaped the risk of becoming either "a French lake" or an appendage to the Euxine.

With what double-quick time "the paramount destinies" may overtake the paralysed continent, if the present crisis be lost, one single consideration will show. Reconstitute Poland: and you compel Russia to furnish the barrier against herself; you recruit your battalions of defence from her own army of aggression, and gain a twofold strength. Neglect and abandon Poland: and then, despairing of the West, which has only pitied and betrayed her, she will turn to the East with avenging reconciliation, accept her "assimilation," and fulfil her destinies as the van-guard of attack on Europe instead of the rear-guard of defence. It is not to be supposed that sixteen millions of men, constituting the very pith of the Slavonic stem, imparting the vital force to any power that holds them,—men with a herit-

age of historic recollections kept fresh by recent heroism and endeared by protracted exile,—men united in the belief of a great future for them, and restless because watching for its approach, —will be content to sink into negation and play no part upon the world. Deny a future to their *country*, and they will take it for their *race*. The Slavonic family numbers some eighty millions, protruded in distinct advance-posts into every state of Eastern Europe, but in Poland alone forming an unbroken and homogeneous mass. The whole of this family is possessed, as by a religion, with the belief that the next volume of the world's history is to be theirs; that as other tribes are frittered into disunion or wear out, their compact body is to move westward and take its turn of dominion. This exciting dream the Czar does not neglect to humour and sustain. While we poor sceptics are ashamed to appeal to any manly faith and generous enthusiasm, he reigns and conquers by the power of intense and ambitious superstitions. He turns to the South, and lifts the standard of the Greek cross. He turns to the West, and shows the banner of Panslavism ready to be unfurled. The oppressions of orthodox Christendom serve his purpose with the foreign Hellenes, and the aspirations of race with the Catholic Poles. Of the former weapon you have hoped to deprive him by securing to the Greek Christians their rights; you must turn the latter against him by giving the Poles a career. If you do not make haste to divide the Slaves politically, they will ere long flow together ethnologically, and sweep with a wave of irresistible advance over the lands of riper civilisation. In this form, if you provide no better, will come the answer to the indolent question of the political unbeliever—"But *is* there a Poland?" At the head of the Russian crusade, bearing the Panslavic flag, with Slovaks and Pomeranians flocking round them as they go, leaving the wreck of Turkey to Bulgarians and Serbs, exploding Austria by firing Croats, and Tschechs, and Dalmatians at once, they will bring their reply, "Yes, here we are!" In short, this people, scattered, oppressed, disappointed of its destinies, yet still a people with a memory and a hope is and must remain a power;—to-day, mainly in the hands of our enemy; to-morrow, if we will, our bulwark against him;—but failing this, turning the next day into the retributive instrument by which he becomes the scourge of the world. Make of Warsaw a new Slavonic centre,—Western, Catholic, and free; and the old political and religious antagonism towards Moscow will suppress the incipient ethnological sympathy; will turn it from concurrence into competition; and direct the face of patriotic ambition eastward instead of westward. It has become the fashion to treat this opinion as the special crotchet of refugees and democrats. It

was not so regarded when it was last discussed by the assembled diplomatists of Europe; it is not so regarded, we are convinced, by any first-class statesman living now. The French Emperor and Lord Palmerston do not, we imagine, dissent from the judgment of Talleyrand, "that the one supreme question for Europe is the Polish; that the partition of that country is and must remain the presage and cause of endless disturbances; that only in its restoration is any security for the Continent to be found." They know the significance of Metternich's emphatic warning to Hardenberg,—"that posterity would never forgive this generation, if the opportunity were lost of limiting Russia by the re-establishment of Poland; and that Austria had better perish than permit the annexation of Warsaw."* They see clearly enough the truth of Lord Castlereagh's assertion, that "if Russia is hereafter to wield a Polish national army as a new and most formidable instrument of war,"—"the adjacent powers cannot live in security and peace, in the presence of such a military power, when stript of their frontiers; nor will Europe feel satisfied with that equilibrium for its daily protection which requires its whole military power to be displaced and put in motion upon every aberration of a particular state from the line of duty."† They know that time has detracted nothing from the justice of these sentiments. But financial necessity in the one country, parliamentary government in the other, has established a habit of political dependence on middle-class and moneyed opinion,—an opinion sensitive to sacrifice, inapprehensive of historical relations, and sceptical of international dangers. Hence our statesmen fear to rely upon their own convictions; and act less on the policy they would ultimately approve than on computation of the support immediately at hand. At the present crisis this moral cowardice is, we believe, a complete mistake. Let them frankly ask support from the two nations for a bold and statesman-like enterprise in Poland, and party feeling and selfish discontent will be unable to show their heads. Let them ask no leave and no advice at Vienna and Berlin; and, if they only contrive to succeed, they will get plenty of support even thence. The pressure of Russia once lifted off, German sentiments will begin to return; the opinions of a better age of German statesmen will recover their weight; and the shuffling neutrality of courts be exchanged for the hearty good-will of peoples.

The policy which we have indicated could not fail to alter the attitude of the Northern as well as the German powers. In the absence of any counterbalancing state upon the Baltic ex-

* Gervinus's Geschichte des 19ten Jahrhunderts, i. 209.

† Castlereagh Correspondence with the Emperor Alexander, p. 23.

cept the Prussian and the Scandinavian as at present defined, it is vain to expect active co-operation in the war from Denmark or Sweden. As on the Continent, so within the Sound, we encounter nothing but Russia at first-hand or Russia at second-hand;—but still every where Russia. Has she not a reversionary interest in the Danish crown? Does she not stand virtually at the gates of Stockholm? Is it forgotten by either, how she took Norway from the one to give it to the other, and awarded Finland to herself? Has she not, within two years, set her thievish eyes on Finmark, and despatched "summer travellers" to survey by stealth the lines of road, and take soundings in Fiords where the water is never frozen and the largest navy might always lie? In the face of a neighbour whose power and inclinations are alike unchastened, what help can these second-rate states dare to give us? King Oscar may well fear that Finland, if restored to him at the expense of a Russia otherwise entire, would be but a fatal gift, which no outside Atlantic alliances could enable him to hold; and which would never be repaid without a huge territorial usury, if not the forfeiture of a crown. But with a restored Poland at Riga it would be otherwise. The territories bordering on the Neva would be enclosed between two states with no probable causes of mutual collision, and with a common paramount interest in preventing the aggrandisement of the Czars. An advance on Finland could be taken in the rear from Courland. The whole group of countries now paralysed by a terror that is ubiquitous would breathe again, and be free both to develop their interior life and to ally themselves by their natural affinities. North Germany, now misrepresented by its courts and benumbed by its officialism, would assert its true genius again, and escape from federal intrigues and military drill into national existence. The lands of the Northmen and the Danes, so akin to our own in habits, language, and feeling, would join us in defending the freedom of the seas, in favouring the development of secondary nations, and checking any tendency to huge uniformity of empire. The countries of Luther, of Gustavus Adolphus, and of the Princes of Orange would own with us the deep pledges which their history and ours has given to the Reformation; and refuse to surrender the principles of Protestant civilisation to any returning sacerdotalism. And wherever, as in Sardinia, in Poland, (may we not add, in Italy and in Hungary?) the aspiration after political liberty has sprung direct out of the bosom of the old church without passing through the medium of a religious revolution the alliance of France, Catholic but not papal, with England, conservative though Protestant and free, against the living embodiment of hierarchical and military aggression, may well set at

rest ecclesiastic scruples, and show that around the standard now raised the progressive tendencies of civilised Europe, be the baptism that consecrates them what it may, are assembling themselves for mutual protection. England is prepared to be faithful to such an alliance. She is falsely accused, as an entire people, of selfish indifference to the political courses of the outlying world. Show her a nation, or group of nations, free of the soldier, free of the priest, reverent to law, resolute for justice, trusting in reality and truth; and we believe she will own, at any sacrifice, her natural affinity. Till international relations are determined less by dynastic diplomacy and more by these inartificial attractions, European societies must remain in the most precarious condition. From the Tuscan Sea to the North Cape, the Continent has scarcely a government that is not either paralysed or retrograde,—that either dares to win or has not utterly forfeited the active loyalty of its best subjects. Yet in every country the elements of regeneration abound, either motionless in despondency or wildly tossing about for want of sympathy and guidance. In the east of Europe is a power that systematically uses for her own ends the weaknesses, the jealousies, the fears, the bigotries of courts and hierarchies. In the west let there be, in expression of its own genius and for the well-being of the world, an alliance around which the strength, the aspirations, the hopes and highest faith of nations may rally and find support. We ask for no propagandism, but only for self-protection to the ripest fruits of political experience and developed Christianity. We would raise a breakwater against any return of the tide of barbarism, which has now had its ebb of centuries, and which nothing but the fierce east-wind can hurl upon us again. And the contribution to these ends for which we pray in 1856 is—A CAMPAIGN IN POLAND.

LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES.

History of England. By T. B. Macaulay. Vols. 3 and 4. Longman.

Philip the Second of Spain. By W. H. Prescott. Bentley.

The Life of Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre. By Miss Freer. 2 vols. Hurst and Blackett.

[A faithful if not very vivid piece of historical biography.]

A History of Rome. By H. G. Liddell, D.D. 2 vols. Murray.

The History of Piedmont. By Antonio Gallenga. 3 vols. Chapman and Hall.

[A thorough and valuable as well as most opportune book, yet not untinged by personal prejudices.]

The Life and Works of Goethe. By G. H. Lewes. 2 vols. Nutt.

The Life of Henry Fielding. By Frederick Lawrence. Hall, Virtue, and Co.

Faith and Practice. By Rev. John Penrose. Murray.

Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination. By Rev. J. B. Mozley, B.D. Murray.

[A disquisition of great clearness as well as subtlety.]

Sermons by the late Rev. Frederick W. Robertson of Brighton. Second Series. Smith and Elder.

[Fully equal in interest to the former series.]

Men and Women. By Robert Browning. 2 vols. Chapman and Hall.

The Rivulet. By Thomas T. Lynch. Theobald.

Noctes Ambrosianæ, 2d vol. By Professor Wilson. Blackwood.

Lectures to Ladies on Practical Subjects. By Messrs. Maurice, Kingsley, &c. Macmillan.

Minnesota; or, the Far West. By Lawrence Oliphant. Blackwood.

[A very amusing volume.]

My Exile in Siberia. By Alexander Herzen. 2 vols. Hurst and Blackett.

The Last of the Arctic Voyages. By Sir Edward Belcher. 2 vols. Lovel Reeve.

[A book full of interesting details conveyed in the most struggling, inarticulate style. The drawings and maps are very well got up.]

Five Years in Damascus. By Rev. J. L. Porter. 2 vols. Murray.

Western Wanderings; or, a Pleasure-Tour in Canada. By W. H. G. Kingston. Chapman and Hall.

Eight Years' Wandering in Ceylon. By S. W. Baker. Longman.

The Fur-Hunters of the Far West. By Alexander Ross. 2 vols. Smith and Elder.

[A strange life ruggedly told. The Indian glossaries are interesting to the philologist.]

Madame Pfeiffer's Second Voyage round the World. Longman.

The Past Campaign. By N. A. Woods. Longman.

The Story of the Campaign of Sebastopol. By Major E. Bruce Hamley. Blackwood.

Two Summer Cruises with the Baltic Fleet in 1854-5. By Rev. R. E. Hughes. Smith and Elder.

Lilliesleaf. By the Author of "Margaret Maitland." Hurst and Blackett.

Zaidee. A Romance. By Margaret Oliphant. Blackwood.

The Heroes; or, Greek Tales for my Children. By Charles Kingsley. Bell and Daldy.

THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

APRIL 1856.

ART. I.—CHARACTERISTICS OF GOETHE.

The Life and Works of Goethe: with Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries, from published and unpublished sources. By G. H. Lewes. 2 vols. Nutt, 1855.

Freundschaftliche Briefe von Goethe und seiner Frau an Nicolaus Meyer, aus den Jahren 1800-1831. Leipzig, Hartung, 1856. [*Friendly Letters from Goethe and his Wife to Nicolas Meyer, between the years* 1800 *and* 1831. Leipzic, 1856.]

GOETHE tells us in his Autobiography, that while his mind was wandering about in search of a religious system, and thus passing over the intermediate areas between the various regions of theological belief, he met with a certain phenomenon which seemed to him to belong to none of them, and which he used to call therefore *dæmonic* influence. "It was not divine, for it seemed unintellectual; nor human, for it was no result of understanding; nor diabolic, for it was of beneficent tendency; nor angelic, for you could often notice in it a certain mischievousness. It resembled chance, inasmuch as it demonstrated nothing; but was like providence, inasmuch as it showed symptoms of continuity. Every thing which fetters human agency seemed to yield before it; it seemed to dispose arbitrarily of the necessary elements of our existence." It is not always, says this great observer of life, "the first and best, either in moral nature or in abilities," who possess this magnetic influence, and it is but rarely "that they recommend themselves by goodness of heart; but a gigantic force goes out of them, and they exercise an incredible power over all creatures, nay, even over the elements themselves; and who can say how far this influence may reach? All *moral* forces united are powerless against them. The masses are fas-

cinated by them. They are only to be conquered by the universe itself," when they enter into conflict with it. Of course Goethe was thinking mainly of Napoleon, and men like him, as he afterwards told Eckermann, when he wrote this passage. Such men put forth, he says, a power, "if not exactly *opposite* to, yet at least *crossing*, that of the general moral order of the world; so that the one might be regarded as the woof, the other as the warp." He adds, that his life-long friend and patron, the Duke of Weimar, had this magnetic influence to such a degree that nobody could resist him, and no work of art ever failed in the poet's hands which the duke had suggested or approved. "He would have been enviable indeed if he could have possessed himself of my ideas and higher strivings; for when the dæmon forsook him, and only the human was left, he knew nôt how to set to work, and was much troubled at it. In Byron this element was probably very active, giving him such powers of fascination, especially with women." Eckermann, with his usual delightfully child-like simplicity, anxiously asks, "Has not Mephistopheles traits of this nature?" "No," replies Goethe, "Mephistopheles is too negative a being. The dæmonic manifests itself in positive active power among artists. It is found often in musicians, more rarely among painters. In Paganini it shows itself to a high degree, and it is by means of it that he produces such great effects." Of himself he says, "it does not lie in my nature, but I am subject to its influence;" by which Goethe probably meant modestly to disclaim having any personal fascination of this kind over other men, but to indicate, what we know from other conversations he really held to be true, that apparently arbitrary and quite inexplicable impulses had often exercised the most decisive and frequently fortunate influence on his own career. But it is quite clear that Goethe did possess in no common degree this faculty for, in a certain sense, *fascinating* men by his presence, as well as by his writings. If Byron had more of it as a man, Goethe succeeded in imparting far more of it to his works, and neither his life nor works can be properly judged without reference to its influence. It is something quite distinct from mere beauty, power, or general merit, either of personal character or of literary creation. It is a power which goes out from the individual man, and which can imprint itself only on such writings as carry with them the stamp of individual character; and not always even on those, if, as for example in the case of Byron's earlier works, the *play* of character is a good deal merged in some exaggerated mood of sentiment. It is not intensity: numbers of writers have surpassed Goethe in the *intensity* both of literary and personal characteristics. Schiller was a man of far keener and intenser, though narrower nature, and yet he could

not help going into utter captivity to that calm and somewhat limply-constituted mind. It is not even in itself independence or strength of will; for though Goethe had this in a remarkable degree, many others, as probably Schiller, had possessed it in as high a degree, who had been quite destitute of his fascinating talent. If it be expressible in one phrase at all (which it is not), it might be called *presence of mind in combination with a deep knowledge of men;*—we mean that absolute and complete adequacy to every emergency which gave Napoleon his *sang froid* at the very turning-point of his great battles, which has descended in some measure on his nephew, and which in the literary world has secured for Johnson his Boswell, and for Goethe his Eckermann. Johnson, indeed, was immeasurably Goethe's inferior in the range of his experience, and, what is of more importance, in his knowledge of man; but he was perhaps his superior in mere presence of mind, and hence was greater in conversation, but less in fascination. The Duke of Wellington had nearly as much presence of mind as Napoleon himself; but he had immeasurably less of the other element of fascination—instinctive knowledge of men, and how to use them.

Goethe is almost unrivalled in the literary world in the degree in which he combines these qualities. Shakespeare may have had them equally, but his dramas are too impersonal to tell us clearly what kind of individual influence he put forth. We should conjecture that his sympathy with men was too vivid to have enabled him to keep, as was the case with Goethe, a part of himself as a permanent reserve-force outside the actual field of action, and ready to turn the flank of any new emergency. Shakespeare can scarcely, we think, have been so uniformly able to *detach* himself, if he would, from the sympathies and passion of the moment as Goethe certainly was; for Goethe, like the little three-eyed girl (*Drei-äuglein*) in the German tale, had always an extra organ besides the eyes he slept and wept with, to take note of his own sleep and his own tears, and an extra will, subject to the command of the third eye, ready to rescue the ordinary will from the intricacies of human emotion. Shakespeare's knowledge of life was, we should think, less drawn from constant vigilance and presence of mind in the passing moment (to which we imagine him to have abandoned himself far more completely than Goethe), and more from the power of memory and imagination to reproduce those sympathies again. However this may be, Shakespeare has himself sketched, less perhaps this cool presence of mind itself than the effect which it produces on other men, in his picture of Octavius Cæsar in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Cæsar's cool self-possessed eye for every emergency, and for the right use of human instruments, and its paralysing effect on Antony's

more attaching and passionate power of character, is a striking example of what Goethe would have called the 'dæmonic' element in human affairs—the element that fascinates men by at once standing out clear and quite independent of their support, and yet indicating the power to read them off and detect for them their own needs and uses. There is always in this kind of magnetic power something repulsive first; but if the repulsion be overcome, the attraction becomes stronger than ever; there is a resistance while the secondary mind is striving to keep its independence, and conscious of the spell,—an intense devotion after he has once relinquished it, and consented to be a disciple or a servant. So the soothsayer tells Antony,—

> "Thy demon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
> Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
> Where Cæsar's is not; but near him, thy angel
> Becomes a fear, as being overpowered; therefore
> Make space enough between you."

And Goethe, who had, as he says, himself experienced the force of this blind fascination in the Duke of Weimar's influence over him, as well as wielded it in no slight degree, tells Eckermann (himself a captive), "The higher a man stands, the more he is liable to this dæmonic influence; and he must take constant care that his guiding will be not diverted by it from the straight way. . . . This is just the difficult point—for our better nature stoutly to sustain itself, and cede to the dæmonic no more than is reasonable."

In Goethe himself this fascinating power existed as strongly as it is well possible to conceive in a man whose whole intellectual nature was of the sympathetic and contemplative, rather than of the practical cast,—who had no occasion to 'use' men except as literary material,—and who, while he stood out independent of them, and could at will shake off from his feet the dust of long association, yet felt *with* them as one who understood their nature and had entered into their experience. Goethe's *sympathetic* and genial insight into man would have been a pure embarrassment to a practical cold-tempered tool-seeker like Napoleon, who never deciphered men through sympathy, but always by an instinctive tact for detecting masterly and workmanlike results. And *vice versâ*, the imperturbable self-possession and Napoleonic *sang froid* of judgment, that underlay in Goethe all storms of superficial emotion, was no little embarrassment to him in many of his literary moods. It prevented him, we think, from ever becoming a great *dramatist*. He could not ever lose himself in his creations: yet it was emphatically this which gave that peculiar and undefinable fascination to those minutely-accurate observations on life with which all his later prose works

and his conversations are so thickly stocked. You can clearly see that men of strong nature did not submit to Goethe's magnetic influence without a struggle. Schiller, at first intensely repelled from him, was only gradually subdued, though thoroughly and strangely magnetised into idolatry by personal converse. Herder's keen and caustic nature vibrated to the end between the intense repulsion he felt for Goethe's completely *un*moral genius, the poet's impartial sympathy for good and evil alike, and the irresistible attractions which his personal influence exerted. Only those could thoroughly cling to Goethe from the first who were not conscious of having any strong intellectual independence to maintain. Women, who love nothing so much as a completely independent self-sustained nature, especially if joined with thorough insight into themselves, were purely fascinated at once. Wieland,* who had no intellectual ground to fight for, surrendered without terms. But no man of eminent ability and a different school of thought seemed to approach him without some sense that, if exposed constantly to his immediate influence, he had to choose between fascination and repulsion. Hence his *very* few intimate male friends: scarcely any man at all able to enter into his mind and share his deeper interests, was likely to be found who could go so completely into captivity to his modes of thought; and, tolerant as he was, the centrifugal force of his mind threw off, to a certain respectful distance, all that the attractive force was not able to appropriate as part of itself. There has been a very similar effect produced by his writings on those even who did not know the man. Novalis fluttered round them, repeatedly expressing his aversion, like a moth round a candle. They invariably repel, at first, English readers with English views of life and duty. As you read more and more, and the characteristic atmosphere of the man is breathed into your life, you find the magnetic force coming strongly over you;—you are as a man mesmerised;—you feel his calm independence of so much on which you helplessly lean, combined with his thorough insight into that desire of yours to lean, drawing you irresistibly towards the invisible intellectual centre at which such independent strength and such genial breadth of thought was possible. And yet you feel that you would be in many and various ways lowered in your own eyes if you could think completely as he thought and act as he acted. It becomes a difficult problem, in the presence of so much genius, and beneath so fascinating an eye, "for our better nature stoutly to sustain itself and yield to the dæmonic no more than is reasonable."

* The most pleasant and characteristic sketch of Wieland in English literature is contained in a few pages contributed to the second volume of Mrs. Austin's *Characteristics of Goethe*, p. 227.

Let us attempt to contribute to the solution of this difficulty by some account and criticism of Goethe's life and genius in connection with that personal character which so subtly penetrates all he has written. Carlyle mistook completely when he said that Goethe, like Shakespeare, leaves little trace of himself in his creations. To a fine eye this is not even true of Shakespeare, though Shakespeare leaves no *immediate* stamp of himself, and critical inference alone can discern him in his works; but far less is it true of Goethe. A rarefied self no doubt it is—a highly distilled gaseous essence; but every where, penetrating all he writes, there is the ethereal atmosphere which travelled about with Johann Wolfgang Goethe.

Mr. Lewes's volumes give us a very able and deeply interesting biography,—a book, indeed, of permanent value; the incidents illustrating character, though not quite exhausting his materials, are disposed with skill, and the artistic criticism, while thoroughly appreciating Goethe's transcendent poetical genius, is independent, sensible, and English. From his moral criticism of Goethe, and sometimes, though not so frequently, from the poetical, we very widely dissent, and hope to give the grounds of our dissent. Something more too might have been done, we think, in the way of defining his individual position both as a poet and as a man. But it is impossible to deny Mr. Lewes high merit for the candour of his biography. Where Goethe has been most censured, he gives all the facts without reserve; and he does not go into any helpless captivity to the poet and artist. He gives his readers the elements for forming their own moral judgments, and he has shaken off from his feet the ponderous rubbish of the German scholiasts. Herr Düntzer and his colleagues are valuably used in Mr. Lewes's book; but they are also valuably spared. Mr. Lewes has not submitted himself to Carlyle's somewhat indiscriminating, strained, and lashed-up furor of adoration for every word that the German sage let drop. There is, by the way, nothing more remarkably illustrative of Goethe's 'dæmonic' influence than Carlyle's worship of him. Except his permanent unfailing self-possession, he lacked almost all the personal qualities which usually fascinate that great writer's eye. And accordingly there runs through the essays on Goethe a tone of arduous admiration,—a helpless desire to fix on some characteristic which he could infinitely admire,—betraying that he was in subjection to the "eyes behind the book," not to the thing which is said in it. There was nothing of the rugged thrusting power of Johnson, of the imperious practical faith of Cromwell, of the picturesque passion of Danton, of the kingly fanaticism of Mahomet; nothing, in short, of the intensity of

[illegible] which Carlyle always needs behind the sagacity he wor-

ships. Mr. Lewes reports a rather affected piece of Carlylese, delivered by the Latter-day oracle in Piccadilly upon one of the injurious attacks that had been directed against Goethe. Carlyle stopped suddenly, and with his peculiar look and emphasis said, "Yes, it is the wild cry of amazement on the part of all spooneys that the Titan was not a spooney too! Here is a godlike intellect, and yet you see he is not an idiot! not in the least a spooney!" This was true enough of Goethe, no doubt; but we suspect that Mr. Carlyle was resisting a secret feeling that there was a limpness and want of *concentration* in Goethe's whole nature intellectual and moral, from the results of which his imperturbable self-possessed presence of mind and great genius alone saved him; that he did in consequence go sometimes up to the brink of spooneyishness in early days, and even across the verge of unreal "high art" in later life. These are just the defects to which Mr. Carlyle is most sensitive. It is true Goethe never was in danger of permanently sinking into either abyss; for his head was always cool, and his third eye, at least, always vigilant. But it may perhaps account for the unusual failure of our great essayist in delineating Goethe, that the poet's wonderful writings were less the real object of his admiration than the strange fascination of the character behind. In the very brief sketch we must give of the poet's life, we shall, of course, so far as possible, select our illustrations from passages or incidents passed over in Mr. Lewes's volumes, wherever they seem to be equally characteristic.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, born at noon on the 28th August 1749, in Frankfort-on-the-Maine, seems to have inherited his genial, sensitive, sensuous, and joyous temperament from his mother; and from his father, the pride, self-dependence, and magnificent formality, the nervous orderliness, perseverance, and the microscopic minuteness of eye by which, at least after the first rush of youth was gone by, he was always distinguished. His mother was but eighteen when he was born. She was a lively girl, full of German sentiment, with warm impulses, by no means much troubled with a conscience, exceedingly afraid of her husband, who was near twenty years her senior, and seemingly both willing and skilful in the invention of occasional white lies adapted to screen her children from his minute, fidgety, and rather austere superintendence. She "spoiled" her children on principle, and made no pretension to conduct a systematic training, which she abhorred. She said of herself in after-years, that she could "educate no child, was quite unfit for it, gave them every wish so long as they laughed and were good, and whipped them if they cried or made wry mouths, without ever looking for any reason why they laughed or cried."* Her

* Letter to her granddaughter,—Düntzer's *Frauenbilder*, p. 544.

belief in Providence was warm with German sentiment, and not a little tinged with superstition. She rejoiced greatly when her son published the *Confessions of a Beautiful Soul,* which she loved as a memorial of a lost pietistic friend. Her religion was one of emotion rather than of moral reverence. She was generous and extravagant, and, after her husband's death, seems to have spent capital as well as income. She was passionately fond of the theatre; a taste which she transmitted to her son. Her hearty simplicity of nature made her every where loved. Her servants loved and stayed with her to the last. She seems to have had at least as much humour as her son, which, for Germans, was not inconsiderable, and not much more sense of awe. She gave the most detailed orders for her own funeral, and even specified the kind of wine and the size of the cracknels with which the mourners were to be regaled; ordering the servants not to put too few raisins into the cakes, as she never could endure that in her life, and it would certainly chafe her in her grave. Having been invited to go to a party on the day on which she died, she sent for answer that "Madame Goethe could not come, as she was engaged just then in dying."* Yet her sensitiveness was so great, that she always made it a condition with her servants that they should never repeat to her painful news that they had picked up accidentally, as she wished to hear nothing sad without absolute necessity. And during her son's dangerous illness at Weimar, in 1805, no one ventured to speak to her of it till it was past, though she affirmed that she had been conscious all the time of his danger without the heart to mention it. This peculiarity Goethe inherited. Courageous to the utmost degree in all physical danger, he could never bear to encounter mental pain which he could any how avoid. He invented soft paraphrases to avoid speaking of the death of those he had loved, and indeed of all death. Writing to Zelter of his son's death, he says, "the staying-away (Aeussenbleiben) of my son has weighed dreadfully upon me in many ways." And his feeling was so well known, that his old friend and mistress, the Frau von Stein, who died before him, directed that her funeral should not pass his door, lest it should impress him too painfully. No one dared to tell him of Schiller's death; and so it was also at the death of his wife's sister, and in other cases. Indeed, his constant unwillingness manfully to face the secret of his own anguish, was a principal source of a shade of *unreality* in a generally very real character. He habitually evaded the awful task of fathoming the meaning and the depth of suffering. He avoided all contact with keen pain. He could not bear, al-

* Düntzer's *Frauenbilder*, p. 583.

though in the neighbourhood, to visit his brother-in-law at a time when his sister's child was dying. It was not weakness,—it was his principle of action; and the effect remains in his works. He writes like a man who had not only experienced but *explored* every reality of human life *except* that of anguish and remorse. The iron that enters into the soul had found him too; but instead of fronting it as he fronted all other realities of life, and pondering its message to the last letter, he drew back from it with what speed he might. *This* experience even his Faust wants. Remorse, grief, agony, Goethe gently waived; and, by averting his thoughts, softened them gradually without exhausting their lesson. Hence his passion never reaches the deepest deep of human life. It can glow and melt, but is never a consuming fire. His Werther, Tasso, Ottilie, and Clärchen, suffer keenly, but never *meet* the knife-edge. There is nothing in his poems like the courageous reality of suffering which vibrates through some of Shelley's lyrics and his *Cenci*. The fascination of pain he can paint, but not the conquest of the will over its deeper aspect of *terror*. The temperament he inherited from his mother. But to him was granted a conspicuously despotic will, which should have enabled him to sound this depth also.

From his father it is far more difficult to say what qualities of mind Goethe inherited. The old man had always *worried* his family; and it became fashionable among the poet's friends, who were enthusiastic about his mother, to ignore or depreciate the old counsellor, and they seem to have regarded it as a "mercy" when "Providence removed him." There are, however, one or two incidents in the Autobiography which convey an impression that his affection for his children was as real and deep as even that of his wife. He was a formal man, with strong ideas of straight-laced education, passionately orderly (he thought a good book nothing without a good binding), and never so much excited as by a necessary deviation from the "pre-established harmony" of household rules. He could not submit to the inevitable. He was the kind of man who is so attached to his rules, that if he cannot shatter the obstacles of circumstance, he thinks it next best to let the obstacles of circumstance shatter him. He had none of his son's calm presence of mind. But whatever perseverance of temper Goethe had, he probably gained from his father. He could not bear to do any thing superficially. He was as thorough (*gründlich*, as the Germans say,) in preparing Wolfgang for the coronation of the emperor by an exhaustive investigation into the authorities for every ceremony to be observed, as in teaching him the civil law. Einleitung, Quellen, &c. were all raked carefully up; for was not the coronation a part of

the *Entwickelung der Geschichte?* He had the formal notions about every thing, considering rhyme the essence of poetry, and believing that pictures, like wine, improved in value by mere keeping. He taught his children himself, and completely alienated his daughter by his dry and exacting manner. But he was at least in earnest with his task. He began to learn both English and drawing at the same time with his children, that his own participation in their efforts might spur them on. He copied all his children's drawing-copies "with an English lead-pencil upon the finest Dutch paper; and not only observed the greatest clearness of outline, but most accurately imitated the hatching of the copies with a light hand. He drew the whole collection, number by number, while we children jumped from one head to another just as we pleased." This is very characteristic of his son's genius in later years, at least in the microscopic detail. After the first outburst of the poet's youthful passion, the lad took a sudden passion for rude fragmentary drawings from nature, on all sorts of odd gray scraps of paper. And of this time he tells us, "the pedagogism of my father, on this point too, was greatly to be admired. He kindly asked for my attempts, and drew lines round every imperfect sketch. . . . The irregular leaves he cut straight, and thus made the beginning of a collection in which he wished at some future time to rejoice in the progress of his son." There seems to us real tenderness here. He was a proud man, who had drawn back into himself at the first repulse from civic politics; and was hardly reconciled to his son's adhesion to the Weimar court, because he dreaded lest some ducal caprice should bring mortification to his family pride.

The poet was born, as he himself records, with that sedate kind of humour in which alone he excelled, with a "propitious horoscope." There was clear anticipation in it of the special worship of young ladies, and of a general sceptre over earth and air. "The sun stood in the sign of the Virgin, and was culminating for the day." Jupiter and Venus were friendly; (little Pallas, latent for another half-century, must surely have lent a helping ray;) Mercury was not adverse; Mars and Saturn indifferent; "the moon alone, just full, exerted the power of her opposition, all the more as she had reached her planetary hour; she therefore resisted my birth, which could not be accomplished till this hour was passed."

Frankfort was a busy old-fashioned town, with old walls and new walls, full of lingering traditions and gray customs still surviving, which served as an antique poetic frame for its changing pictures of motley German life. Goethe remembered his childish exploring expeditions about the old walls, moats, towers, and posterns, with great delight. Directly behind his father's house

was a large area of gardens, to which the family had no access, stretching away to the walls of the city. The boy used often to gaze on this forbidden Eden in evening hours from a room in the second story called the garden-room. Even after the lapse of sixty years, the many-coloured picture of these gardens—the solitary figures of careful neighbours stooping to tend their flowers, the groups of skittle-players, and the bands of merry children,—all blended together in the warm sunset—the floating sounds of many voices, of the rolling balls, and the dropping ninepins—would again beset his imagination, bringing with them many a "tale of visionary hours."

Mr. Lewes remarks that the child's character frequently presents far more distinctly the ground-plan of the matured man's than the youth's, since the proportions of the whole are often completely disguised by the temporary caprices of newly-expanded passions and newly-gained freedom. This is, at all events, extremely true of Goethe, and is generally true of all casts of character where the permanent influence of a manly conscience does not start forth into life along with the new powers and new freedom it is to control. The awful sense of responsibility and moral freedom, once awakened, does not again subside, and where searching moral convictions have once taken hold on the character, the subsidence of youthful impetuousness does not give back again the characteristic features of childhood: but in Goethe this element was always faint, and the difference between the child's mind and the man's was only a difference in maturity of powers; when the spring-tide of youth fell back, his inward life was as it had been, only that all was stronger and riper. He was a reflective, old-fashioned, calmly-imaginative child, always fascinated by a mystery, but never, properly speaking, *awed* by it. It kindled his imagination; it never subdued him. He was full of wonder, and quite without veneration. In the "altar to the Lord" which the child secretly built on a music-stand of his father's at seven years of age, and on which he burnt incense in the shape of a pastil, until he found that it was at the risk of injuring his altar, he was innocently *playing* with a subject which to almost any other child would have been too sacred for imaginative amusement. He was evidently charmed with the picturesqueness of the patriarchal sacrifices, and thought with delight of the blue smoke rising up to heaven beneath the first beam of the rising sun: of the *religious* feeling, the desire to *give up* any thing of his own out of love to God, he had not of course any idea;—that in a child of seven no one would expect. But what is characteristic is, the absence of any restraining awe, in thus mingling the thought of God with his play at an age when he had already begun to think whether

it was just in Him to send earthquakes and storms. Religion was already to him what it ever continued to be,—not the communion with holiness, but at most a graceful development of human life, a fountain of cool mystery playing gratefully over the parched earth.

Mr. Lewes has translated a delightful anecdote of Goethe's relation to his mother, from Bettina von Arnim's account. That bold young lady's authority is generally more than questionable; here, however, there is the strongest evidence of internal truth:

"This genial, indulgent mother employed her faculty for story-telling to his and her own delight. 'Air, fire, earth, and water, I represented under the forms of princesses; and to all natural phenomena I gave a meaning, in which I almost believed more fervently than my little hearers. As we thought of paths which led from star to star, and that we should one day inhabit the stars, and thought of the great spirits we should meet there, I was as eager for the hours of story-telling as the children themselves; I was quite curious about the future course of my own improvisation, and any invitation which interrupted these evenings was disagreeable. There I sat, and there Wolfgang held me with his large black eyes; and when the fate of one of his favourites was not according to his fancy, I saw the angry veins swell on his temples, I saw him repress his tears. He often burst in with 'But, mother, the princess won't marry the nasty tailor, even if he does kill the giant.' And when I made a pause for the night, promising to continue it on the morrow, I was certain that he would in the meanwhile think it out for himself, and so he often stimulated my imagination. When I turned the story according to his plan, and told him that he had found out the *dénouement*, then was he all fire and flame, and one could see his little heart beating underneath his dress! His grandmother, who made a great pet of him, was the confidant of all his ideas as to how the story would turn out; and as she repeated these to me, and I turned the story according to these hints, there was a little diplomatic secrecy between us, which we never disclosed. I had the pleasure of continuing my story to the delight and astonishment of my hearers, and Wolfgang saw with glowing eyes the fulfilment of his own conceptions, and listened with enthusiastic applause.'"

His self-command and self-importance showed themselves early. He once waited resolutely for many minutes till school-time was "up," though his schoolfellows were lashing his legs with switches till they bled, before he would defend himself by a single movement; and then fell upon them with immense success. Like all petted children, he did not like school; his pride was hurt by the unrespecting self-assertion of the republic around him. His most intimate friends were usually women and younger men. He never could endure to be laughed at. Her-

der's rather vulgar pun on his name (Göthe), made in college days,

"Thou, the descendant of gods, or of Goths, or of gutters,"*

was perhaps a little annoying for the time; but it clearly rankled in his mind; and he mentions it bitterly forty years later, after Herder's death, in the course of a very kindly criticism, as an instance of the sarcasm which rendered Herder often unamiable; characteristically adding this most true principle of etiquette, "the proper name of a man is not like a cloak, which only hangs about him, and at which one may at any rate be allowed to pull and twitch; but it is a close-fitting garment, which has grown over and over him, like his skin, and which one cannot scrape and flay without injuring him himself." As a small boy he is said to have walked in an old-fashioned way, in order to distinguish himself from his schoolfellows, and to have told his mother, "I *begin* with this. Later on in life I shall distinguish myself in far other ways." One cannot help thinking a little judicious whipping and *nonchalance* at home might at this period have been of great service to him. Yet the 'oracular' so entered into his nature, that one could ill spare it now from his essence. It gives a certain antique support to the light leaves of poetry that are twined round it.

His minute self-observation early showed itself. The following recollection in his Autobiography is extremely characteristic:

"We boys held a Sunday assembly, where each of us was to produce original verses. And here I was struck by something strange, which long caused me uneasiness. My poems, whatever they might be, always seemed to me the best. But I soon remarked that my competitors, who brought forth very lame affairs, were in the same condition, and thought no less of themselves. Nay, what appeared yet more suspicious, a good lad (though in such matters altogether unskilful), whom I liked in other respects, but who had his rhymes made by his tutor, not only regarded these as the best, but was thoroughly persuaded they were his own, as he always maintained in our confidential intercourse. Now, as this illusion and error was obvious to me, the question one day forced itself upon me, whether I myself might not be in the same state, whether those poems were not really better than mine, and whether I might not justly appear to those boys as mad as they to me? This disturbed me much and long; for it was altogether impossible for me to find any external criterion of the truth; I even ceased from producing, until at length I was quieted by my own light temperament, and the feeling of my own powers."

He could not see then that what really distinguished him above them was not near so much, probably, the excellence of

* In German "Koth," literally "mud."

his verses, as the power of detecting and applying to his own case the general law of self-deception.

Goethe was, as he intimates in *Wilhelm Meister*, in a passage well known to be in fact autobiographical, a very inquisitive child, and as unscrupulous as spoiled children are in gratifying his inquisitiveness. His childish fondness for the 'store-room' is rather universal and human than individual and personal. "More than any other of the young ones I was in the habit of looking out attentively to see if I could notice any cupboard left open, or key standing in its lock." There are few minuter bits of life in his writings than his description of the predatory excursion into the store-room one Sunday morning, when the key had not been withdrawn. "I marked this oversight," he says. He pilfered, however, with less than his usual self-possession; the cook made "a stir in the kitchen," and even Goethe was flurried. But he seems to have had no ordinary childish shame and self-reproach connected with the adventure—the loved puppets were always dearer to him because of the "French-plum" fragrance which they had acquired in the scene of theft.

His delight in the theatre was the same through life. He liked the little mystery. He liked still better to have the key to the mystery. He was as quick as any child to find out "the man in the bear;" but it did not destroy his pleasure, especially if he was able to be "the man in the bear" himself; and besides, his heart was always in his eyes. But what mainly fascinated him in the theatre, we think, was its condensation and concentration of life into one consecutive piece. His imagination was wandering, digressive, microscopic, incoherent; he had the greatest difficulty in grasping in one vision a consecutive whole. He saw vivid points in succession, and saw the continuity and growth; but his sight was like the passing of a microscope over a surface,—it laid bare the transition, but did not give a connected vision. He saw too intensely and too far at each point to be able to sweep his eye quickly over the whole. The theatre helped to remedy this defect, and he was grateful to it. But for that very reason he never could write successfully for the theatre. The boy's passion for the theatre had one very bad effect. During the French occupation of Frankfort he (then a lad of ten to twelve years old) had a free admission to the French theatre, which he used daily, accompanied by no older friend. His mother unwisely obtained the reluctant permission of his father that he should go; and his consequent quick progress in French reconciled his father to the habit. The lad had constant access behind the scenes and in the green-room along with his young French companions. Here we have little doubt the first delicacy of his mind was rubbed off. Pro-

bably he was constitutionally deficient in that element of mind which shame and reverence have in common (*αἰδώς*, as the Greeks called it); and during the French occupation of Frankfort, at a most susceptible age, he was subjected to influences that would be likely to have endangered the most delicate of natures. He was too young, his friends imagined, for danger; but certainly he was not at all too young for that kind of curiosity about evil which is often more tainting than evil itself. Even in the late-written autobiographical recollections of his youth this is distinctly visible.

At the age of fourteen he was a great tale-composer; and one of these tales, "The New Paris," full of the genius of his later years, he has preserved in his Autobiography. It is a most characteristic tale, brimming over with the self-importance of the boy, and full also of the fanciful grace, the mysterious simplicity, and the simple mysteriousness of his older compositions. It is far the most graceful of his short tales; and must, we think, have received some touches from his older hand. For our own parts, we greatly prefer it to the second part of *Faust*. But the childlike delight in puzzling his readers is the same. The scene of the fairy-tale, which is autobiographic, is laid in gardens discovered by him through the old wall of the city. The tale ends with the following charming mystery:

"The porter did not speak another word; but before he let me pass the entrance, he stopped me, and showed me some objects on the wall over the way, while at the same time he pointed backwards to the door. I understood him; he wished to imprint the objects on my mind, that I might the more certainly find the door which had unexpectedly closed behind me. I now took good notice of what was opposite to me. Above a high wall rose the boughs of extremely old nut-trees, and partly covered the cornice at the top. The branches reached down to a stone tablet, the ornamented border of which I could perfectly recognise, though I could not read the inscription. It rested on the corbel of a niche, in which a finely-wrought fountain poured water from cup to cup into a great basin, that formed, as it were, a little pond, and disappeared in the earth. Fountain, inscription, nut-trees, all stood directly one above another; I would paint it as I saw it.

Now, it may well be conceived how I passed this evening and many following days, and how often I repeated to myself this story, which even I could hardly believe. As soon as it was in any degree possible, I went again to the Bad Wall, at least to refresh my remembrance of these signs, and to look at the precious door. But, to my great amazement, I found all changed. Nut-trees, indeed, overtopped the wall, but they did not stand immediately in contact. A tablet also was inserted in the wall, but far to the right of the trees, without ornament, and with a legible inscription. A niche with a fountain was found far to the left, but with no resemblance whatever to that which I had seen; so that I almost believed that the second adventure

was, like the first, a dream; for of the door there is not the slightest trace. The only thing that consoles me is the observation, that these three objects seem always to change their places. For in repeated visits to the spot, I think I have noticed that the nut-trees have moved somewhat nearer together, and that the tablet and the fountain seem likewise to approach each other. Probably, when all is brought together again, the door, too, will once more be visible; and I will do my best to take up the thread of the adventure. Whether I shall be able to tell you what further happens, or whether it will be expressly forbidden me, I cannot say.

This tale, of the truth of which my playfellows vehemently strove to convince themselves, received great applause. Each of them visited alone the place described, without confiding it to me or the others, and discovered the nut-trees, the tablet, and the spring, though always at a distance from each other; as they at last confessed to me afterwards, because it is not easy to conceal a secret at that early age. But here the contest first arose. One asserted that the objects did not stir from the spot, and always maintained the same distance: a second averred that they did move, and that too away from each other: a third agreed with the latter as to the first point of their moving, though it seemed to him that the nut-tree, tablet, and fountain rather drew near together: while a fourth had something still more wonderful to announce, which was, that the nut-trees were in the middle, but that the tablet and the fountain were on sides opposite to those which I had stated. With respect to the traces of the little door they also varied. And thus they furnished me an early instance of the contradictory views men can hold and maintain in regard to matters quite simple and easily cleared up. As I obstinately refused the continuation of my tale, a repetition of the first part was often desired. I was on my guard, however, not to change the circumstances much, and by the uniformity of the narrative I converted the fable into truth in the minds of my hearers."

How vividly this reminds us of his mysterious conduct to Eckermann with regard to some portions of the second part of *Faust*. In that dark composition Faust asks Mephistopheles to show him Helena; and Mephistopheles tells him it can only be managed by application "to goddesses who live sublime in loneliness, but not in space, still less in time—of whom to speak is embarrassment"—'the mothers;' 'a glowing tripod'* is to assure him that he has attained the deepest point of all, and by its shining he is to see the mothers. But there is *no way* there, as there *can* be no way into the "untrodden and untreadable," where he is to be surrounded by "lonelinesses." On hearing 'the mothers' mentioned, Faust starts back shuddering; and when asked why, only replies,

"Die Mütter! Mütter! 's klingt so wunderlich."
(The mothers! mothers! it has the strangest ring.)

* The passage is, it seems to us, a satire upon the Hegelian practice of deducing every thing out of "the pure nothing," by what may be called the tripartite cork-screw philosophy, which does every thing in logical triplets, but winds itself a little higher at each repetition.

Poor Eckermann had been set to read this remarkable scene, and was, naturally, a good deal puzzled. But he shall tell his own story.

"This afternoon Goethe did me the great pleasure of reading those scenes in which Faust visits the mothers.

The novelty and unexpectedness of this subject, with his manner of reading the scene, struck me so forcibly, that I felt myself translated into the situation of Faust, shuddering at the communication from Mephistopheles.

Although I had heard and felt the whole, yet so much remained an enigma to me, that I felt myself compelled to ask Goethe for some explanation. But he, in his usual manner, wrapped himself up in mystery, looking on me with wide open eyes, and repeating the words,—

'*Die Mütter! Mütter! 's klingt so wunderlich.*'

'I can betray to you no more, except that I found in Plutarch that in ancient Greece the mothers were spoken of as divinities. This is all for which I am indebted to tradition; the rest is my own invention. Take the manuscript home with you, study it carefully, and see to what conclusion you come.'"

The good childlike Eckermann conscientiously tasked himself to find the riddle out quite as anxiously as Goethe's boy-audience did about the door in the old wall; perhaps it was even less worth while. He elaborated a most complex and difficult 'view' on the subject of these mothers; but Goethe let nothing further transpire. Indeed it might fairly wait at least till the nut-trees, and the fountain, and the tablet in the old Frankfort wall, had drawn together again.

There is one other slight incident of his boyhood so characteristic of the man that it is worth mentioning. The calm, unabashed, self-fortified boy appears in it the very image of the man. Coming out of the theatre, he remarked ponderingly to a companion, with reference to one of the young actors, "How handsomely the boy was dressed, and how well he looked! Who knows in how tattered a jacket he may sleep to-night!" The mother of the lad happened to be beside him in the crowd, took great umbrage, and read Goethe a long lecture. "As I could neither excuse myself nor escape from her, I was really embarrassed; and when she paused for a moment said, without thinking, 'Well, why do you make such a noise about it?—to-day red, to-morrow dead.'* These words seemed to strike the woman dumb. She stared at me, and moved away from me as soon as it was in any degree possible." This was not meant to give pain; it was only that he habitually cut short what annoyed him, without caring much how. He had the nerve and the presence of mind, and of other results he thought little.

* "Heute roth, morgen todt,"—a German proverb.

There is a like tale, referring to later years, of a fanatical admirer bursting into the bedroom of an inn where Goethe was undressing, and throwing himself ecstatically at his feet, pouring forth at the same time a set speech of adoration. Goethe blew out the candle and jumped into bed. This was truly a great inspiration;* but the power of calmly warding off any thing that did not suit him was exercised quite without reference to the moral elements of the case. Goethe had at every period of his life a thoroughly kindly nature; but one, as it seems to us, quite unvisited by any devoted affection. The conception of really living for another probably never occurred to him. His attachments to women were numerous and violent, never self-devoting. For his mother and sister he clearly felt warmly, but certainly he was neither a fond brother nor a fond son. After his transition to Weimar, he visited his mother only at very long intervals, and never seems to have hastened to her side in any time of special trouble, though he always rejoiced to see her and wished to have her with him. In the last eleven years of her old age he never once visited Frankfort, his summer holiday always taking him in another direction—to Karlsbad or Marienbad. And his letters were too few to keep her always well informed even of his more important movements. He was, in short, a kind and hearty, rather than a deeply-attached brother and son. If he never gave himself up to an affection, he never demanded or even expected it from another. Never was there a less jealous or exacting man. He seldom interfered with his own calm process of self-culture for the sake of another. He never expected another to do it for him. But this remark belongs to a later period of his life. Yet the genial but pliant and self-considering nature of his relation to others is distinctly visible in his childhood. He was already beginning to accommodate himself to all inevitabilities, and to ward off, wherever possible, all that was foreign to his nature. The extent of his boyish studies was not less wide than that of his boyish experience of life. To Latin, Greek, Italian, German, English, and Hebrew, together with drawing, music, geography, and Roman law, he had given much time, and apparently made considerable progress in them, before he went to college at sixteen. He scattered his studies, and had 'alternate fits' of Hebrew and drawing, &c.; but his retentive memory did not easily lose what it had once laid hold of.

In 1764 Goethe began that habit of falling in love, of which he never broke himself for the next sixty years. Mr. Lewes makes light of his love for Gretchen, and the scholiasts seem

* We do not know the authority for this anecdote of Goethe. Mr. Emerson used to narrate it, not without keen sympathy for the oppressed lion.

never to have traced her history. But boyish as his passion was, the separation clearly caused him as intense a suffering, and a more inconsolable despair than any subsequent adoration. His mind had not yet got the strength to carry him through. His nature was still the dependent nature of a home-bred boy. He had yet no intellectual passions, no penetrating consciousness of creative power. It is clear to us that this kind, sisterly Gretchen, was still living in his imagination when he immortalised her name in *Faust*. The night of Joseph II.'s coronation, when he forgot his secret door-key, by which, through his mother's connivance, he used to enter long after his father had supposed him to be in bed, was the last night of his childhood. With his separation from Gretchen there came upon him the moody humours, the dark sentimental infinitudes, the confusion of energies, the thankless melancholies and boisterous caprices peculiar to that period of life when young men are most grateful to themselves and most oppressive to mankind. The passion for Gretchen had involved him with a set not quite so harmless. And the stiff dignity of his father was sadly injured by having his son's name mixed innocently up in questions of swindling, and even forgery. He was subjected to the companionship of an accommodating tutor; and a year later, in the autumn of 1765, went forth to see the world as a student of the University of Leipzic.

Most poets' youth is turbid, and apt to be egotistical. Goethe's is not an exception. He seems to have had generally, when in good health, buoyant spirits. But the spiritual abysses are of course unfathomable. We must pass this period briefly. Mr. Lewes has got some very interesting letters concerning Goethe at this time from his college friends. At Leipzic Goethe got a good deal of knowledge without much diligence. He fell into dissipation. The only pure influence over him that he felt powerful was that of Gellert, the professor of *belles lettres*, and one lady-friend, the wife of a law professor. The latter died during his studentship. Gellert's mild influence he felt painful and a reproach to him, and he began to avoid it. Perhaps it was not very wisely exerted. He used, says Goethe, "to hold his head down, and ask us with his weeping, winning voice, whether we went regularly to church, who was our confessor, and whether we attended the holy communion. If we passed this examination but ill, we were dismissed with lamentations, we were more annoyed than edified; and yet we could not help loving the man heartily." Goethe's law-lectures were rather jokes. He naturally preferred drawing caricatures of the official persons in their official costume, to taking notes. Fritters (very good ones), hot from the fire, came into competition with one of these classes, and were considered the more attractive. Goethe fell deeply in

love again at Leipzic; but he quarrelled with the young lady, and he seems to say the despair he felt at her loss was the impulse which plunged him into dissipation. This affection was the origin of his little pastoral piece, *The Lover's Humours*, which certainly gives promise of his future power. Besides containing some fine lines, and one fair living character in profile, it shows that rich *fertility* of ordinary feeling and harmonious sentiment which must flow on long in order to temper the mind to the higher creative mood. A poet who, like Gray, for instance, has no *flow* of level feeling, loses the predisposing influences from which the deeper truer insight can alone come. When the poet has reached, as it were, the *ordinary* level of genial human emotion, then, and not sooner, do his special characteristics begin to work with effect. If he is not in the first place *luxuriant in common feeling*, he loses all the advantage of his higher faculties. Goethe, like all great poets, was most luxuriant in mere ordinary thought and feeling; and when once fairly afloat in that, his genius began to work. Gray's imagination had good sails; but he had not enough common human nature to float in, his vessel was always aground. The *Fellow-Sinners*, which Goethe wrote at this same time, has equal ease, but not equal warmth, with the piece just mentioned, and consequently very little trace of his characteristic power. From Leipzic Goethe went home ill, after three years' residence, in 1768. His father was irritated by his delicate health, and still more by any thing like hypochondriacal conversation. His mother and sister paid him, as is usual in such cases, something like divine honours. They were moped, and delighted to have an invalid to worship. He looked into alchemy, and began to think of Faust.

In the spring of 1770 he went to the University of Strasburg, where he fell in with Herder, who first introduced him to the *Vicar of Wakefield*, the loose awkward machinery of which Goethe (who never had any power of constructing a plot) afterwards partly borrowed in his novel of *Wilhelm Meister*. The exquisite humour, and childlike simplicity of taste in that book, are Goldsmith's own. But in the *style* of representing nature and life Goethe is not at all unlike Goldsmith. Like him, he does not impartially paint, but rather vaguely indicates the principal influences of the scene before him. He sketches no outlined picture, at least of *men*—but gives one or two figures, hovering too close to the eye to be caught completely in any one glance, and which are presented therefore successively in minute yet very significant details to the closest conceivable scrutiny; and for the rest, he indicates only the most important inlets of accessory influence in a few words of loose spacious suggestion. As Goldsmith presents Dr. Primrose and his wife by such minute suc-

cessive touches, that not till you fall back from the story can you see them as a whole, and represents the daughters only by the general streams of influence they diffuse, the rosy and violet light their characters respectively reflect, in the vaguer distance, adding too those influences of external nature which most beset the senses, but no clear landscape,—so also Goethe painted in his three novels, *Werther*, *Meister*, and finally, though with more distinctive outline, and less attempt at indicating a whole character or a whole landscape by isolated *samples*, in the *Elective Affinities*. We do not wonder that he told Eckermann, in later years, that he found in Sir Walter Scott the suggestion of a wholly new school of art. That writer's strong, masterly, often hard outlines, were the most vivid possible contrast to the faint fringes of the luminous *nimbus* which usually involves his own most carefully finished figures.

While at Strasburg, Goethe made the acquaintance of the family which seemed to him the counterpart of Dr. Primrose's, and in which he appeared first in the character of Mr. Burchell; exchanging it, however, not for Sir William Thornhill's, but for his own. Pastor Brion had a little parsonage at Drusenheim, sixteen miles north of Strasburg, into which Goethe was introduced, in the disguise of a poor and dilapidated theological student, by a fellow-student. The latter was attached (or becoming so) to the eldest and most lively daughter, whom Goethe identified as the Olivia of Goldsmith's tale. The second daughter, Frederika, who took benign pity on the shabby theologian, and captivated his fancy by her simplicity and grace, reminded him of Sophia; but she little knew that instead of giving rise to a novel, she was starting a new epoch in German criticism, and spinning the first thread of a very ponderous "Frederike litteratur," in which an erudition as yet unborn would discuss, with prodigious learning and subtlety, after collation of Ms. letters, personal examination of the place, and cross-questioning of aged survivors, the precise point where Goethe had crossed the Sesenheim road, the position of her own arbour, and the date of the first kisses she bestowed, and many other questions of equal weight. To have spurred on heavy-armed German commentators (of the class who discuss a lost iota in fragments of Greek plays) into a cumbrous canter of exegetical sympathy with a little affair of the heart, must have been about as far removed from Frederika's presentiments as this *apparatus criticus* is from the light air of the life it "expounds." Imagine an Anthon's "edition of Tennyson's *Miller's Daughter*, with critical notes," and you have a faint picture of the "Frederike litteratur."* Goethe acted his part skilfully,

* There is a profoundly learned controversy, for example, as to whether one of Goethe's letters to a friend at this time was or was not written on the piece

and promised occasionally to "supply" for the pastor on week-day occasions. But, disgusted with his shabby appearance, he fled the next day, only to change one disguise for another. He came back as the innkeeper's boy, with a "christening-cake" and an Alsatian *patois;* and when this disguise was penetrated, he took his own character, and began seriously to fall in love. The visit was often repeated, and Frederika's heart completely gained. Goethe now became uneasy. The presence of Frederika pained him, though he "knew of nothing more pleasant than to think of her while absent." He had to free himself from this influence, which threatened to introduce something foreign to his natural development. He was leaving Strasburg, and once more he visited the "golden children" at Sesenheim, where he found a gray desolate mist settling down over the little parsonage, instead of the fresh buoyant air of days gone by. "I reached her (Frederika) my hand from my horse; the tears stood in her eyes, and I felt very uneasy." He felt more than uneasy. These words copy only the blanched picture that remained in the old man's memory. Frederika fell ill; and Goethe, on his return to Frankfort living in bitter suspense as to the effect on her peace, and yet knowing that he could not comfort her without transforming himself and exchanging a quiet sentiment for real self-devotion of spirit, became restless and miserable. That his final decision was wrong is far from clear. The thought of devoting himself to her gave him no joy, but seemed to weigh him down. But it seems clear that the reason lay, not in the absence of any thing which any other attachment ever gave, but in the reluctance which was now beginning to creep upon him to devote himself and his inward life to any thing outside of himself. The idea of self-development, self-idealisation, as the only scope of his conscious life, was beginning to creep upon him, and to gnaw at the roots of his nature. If he could by one generous act of self-forgetfulness have devoted himself to secure Frederika's happiness, there seems every probability that he would have secured a far happier and clearer life for himself also. It was, perhaps, far less the want of love,—for he never seems to have felt more love,—than the want of strength to cast away the miserable dream of keeping the course of his inward development free from all foreign interference. It was much later than this—when the self-idealising vein had become more prominent—that he wrote to Lavater: "The desire to raise the pyramid of my existence—the base of which is already laid—as high as possible

of blue paper in which some comfits, &c. had been sent to him from Strasburg. The question turns, to a considerable extent, on whether he gave the paper-bag with the comfits to the young ladies, or only the comfits out of it. It is discussed with laborious good faith.

in the air absorbs every other desire, and scarcely ever quits me;"* but the poison was already working in him. Goethe never became a selfish man in the coarse sense of the term. He always cultivated benignant unselfish sympathies as the most graceful elements in this same fancy-pyramid of his existence. He was generous by nature, and would give up, from kindly feeling, any thing that was not of the essence of himself. But it soon became his habit to cultivate disinterested affection only as a subordinate element, needful to the harmony of a universally experienced nature. To have loved the goodness of either God or man more devotedly than he loved its reflex image in his own character would have done him more good than all the sickly pottering with the "pyramid of his existence" with which he was so much occupied.

It would be absurd to say all this about Goethe's youthful conduct to Frederika, were it not the type of what was always happening in his after-life, when he knew by experience that he very much preferred to be passively hampered by a wounded heart to being actively hampered by an affectionate wife. The essence of these tedious tortures was almost always the same. He wished to devote his affections to young ladies *to a limited extent;* he did not wish to devote *himself* to any one except himself. This "limited extent" did not so well meet the views of the young ladies† themselves, who were sometimes, to his infinite embarrassment, willing even to "go to America" with him, or any where else. This was meeting him a great deal more than half-way. He could not, of course, avail himself of the sacrifice.

Goethe returned to Frankfort, bringing with him a little harper-lad whom he had picked up at Mannheim, and with thoughtless kindness promised to befriend. His mother, at first much perplexed, found the boy lodging and employment out of the house. *Götz von Berlichingen* was now in Goethe's mind, and, spurred on by his sister's incredulity as to his literary perseverance, he completed it in its first form in six weeks. To us it seems far the most noble as well as the most powerful of Goethe's dramas. We agree with Mr. Lewes, that in its first shape there are many finer elements which are lost in the later and sanctioned edition. No doubt something is cut away

* Lewes's Life of Goethe, vol. ii. chap. i.

† A distinct classification of Goethe's loves has not yet been added by the critics to the "chronology of the origin" of his writings. It would be a material help to head the different years with the name or names of the ascendant star, and some indication of its apparent brightness. There were about eight A 1's, "heiss und leidenschaftlich geliebte," &c.; five, at least, Æ 1's, with whom he stood "im innigsten Verhältniss der Liebe;" and finally, a great number of "holde Wesen," some of them already obscured by shadows of time, who were recipients of a more transient adoration.

that needed cutting away, and more appearance of unity is given by the condensation of Adelheid's episode. But this is the part on which Goethe's imagination had really worked with finest effect, and the gain to unity is a loss to poetry. It is the only great production of Goethe's in which a really noble, self-forgetful *man* stands out in the foreground to give us the moral standard by which to measure the meaner characters. It is the only great production in which awful shadows of remorse haunt the selfish and the guilty. One reads in it that Goethe's mind had as yet by no means finally embraced the calm self-culture view of life—the doctrine which looked upon women's devotion, human life, indeed the whole universe itself, mainly as artistic material to be assimilated by the individual constitution, and with as little pain in the digestive process as that constitution would allow. Fascinating as *Egmont* is, Egmont himself is the later Goethe, the conscious master-builder condescending to accept from woman, and man, and God, materials for his "pyramid of existence." Götz is a very different figure; and among all Goethe's masculine creations he stands alone,—the only one who did not *use* the world, but *served* it. The play (in its early form) will be thought gross; but it has little of that tainting impurity which turns a microscope full upon the subtler workings of physical passion, to the great disfigurement of some of his later works. In another respect Götz is exceptional. It is curious that Adelheid, in *Götz von Berlichingen*, is the only feminine character of the proud passionate class that Goethe ever drew; and that Maria, much more like his other characters in type, is about the faintest and poorest of them. With all his unmistakable wealth and inimitable grace in producing women's characters, each as distinct from the other as Adelheid is from Maria, they are all, Adelheid only excepted, of the dependent, tender, worshipping class. Mr. Thackeray's Beatrice, in *Esmond*, is less completely exceptional in his writings than Adelheid is in Goethe's. Thackeray and Goethe are alike in this, as in some other respects—both of them have drawn women as living as Shakespeare's. And all three, by one consent, are disposed to make their powerful queen-like women bad. No doubt this is according to nature; but Sir Walter Scott must have seen the exceptions, for his finest female characters (Rebecca, Flora, Die Vernon, &c.) are certainly of the queenly class. Goethe's predilections are explained by the fact that he painted, for the most part, the women who worshipped him, and it may be that he punished Adelheid for not being one of them by robing her in passionate crime. She is the only woman in his works of whom we find no autobiographical trace.

In 1772 Goethe went to Wetzlar, ostensibly to watch chancery suits; and there culled some poignant experiences for his

next work, *Werther*. This he did not write, however, till 1774. We have so recently spoken of this episode in his history,* that we need not dwell on it here. The remarkable contrast, both in substance and form, between *Götz* and *Werther*—written within three years of each other—gives, however, some insight into Goethe's dramatic power and want of power. We find it asserted on all hands—Mr. Lewes vehemently concurring—that a poet must be a greater artist for entirely ignoring all moral partialities, and, as they say, picturing life as it is, not as it ought to be. There is a sense in which it is true (for instance, it is a valuable criticism on Edgeworthian art); but the sense in which it is put forward as a defence of the utter want of *moral perspective* in most of Goethe's productions is certainly not that sense. Compare, for instance, *Götz von Berlichingen* with *Werther*, *Wilhelm Meister*, the *Elective Affinities*, *Egmont*, and even *Faust*. In the first there is as much moral evil as any appetite, however eager for "things as they are," could wish; but it is thrown into its right relative place by the appearance in the foreground of two noble and simple characters—Götz and Elizabeth's—by which all the others are naturally estimated. Shadows are shadows, and light is light. In *Werther* the moral evil introduced is far less—is, indeed, of a quiet, subtle, sentimental kind—the mere heart-eating rust and destructiveness of unmeasured self-indulgence; but there is nothing noble to contrast with it—nothing but the cold external phantom Albert, and the floating-image of Charlotte, reflected in such a mist of Wertherism that it has no distinctness at all. What is the mere artistic effect on the reader's mind? Almost universally this, that the picture, powerful as it is, almost entirely misses its effect from the absence of any fine moral contrasts by which to measure it. It is like the picture of a mist seen from inside. Nothing adds more to the beauty of a landscape than vapours rising round a mountain's brow; but then you must stand out of the fog, and see the dark bold ridges round which they climb. In *Werther* you find painted wreath upon wreath of emotion, blinding doubts, and shapeless passions; no speck of firm land anywhere. This will probably be conceded of *Werther*; but the *moral* part of the criticism applies equally to Goethe's other works. We believe the extraordinary want of *outline* in his characters to be greatly due to this entire absence of any attempt at moral proportion in all his later works. Werther is made, in one letter, to say most characteristically, "I scarce know how to express myself,—my power of representing things is so weak,—every thing swims

* No. I. Article VII. "Goethe and Werther." Mr. Lewes speaks of the "execrable" English translation of *Werther*. He probably wrote this before the one in Bohn's series appeared. It is, on the whole, very well executed.

and wavers so before my mind, that I *can catch no outline;* but I fancy somehow that, if I had clay or wax, I could succeed in moulding. If it lasts longer, I shall get some clay, and begin kneading, even though it be only cakes after all." Werther's mind is so dissolved, that he can only feel and *grope* his way in the dark, as it were, to grace of form. This weakness is partly the expression of an artistic difficulty Goethe really felt in grasping in one glance any extensive outline of thought,—a difficulty due to the microscopic nature of his insight, which only travelled very slowly over a large surface of life: he often *modelled* his groups figure by figure; the outline of the whole grew up as he felt his way to it. But a part reason of this was, that he had no moral graduation for his groups,—no natural admirations which gave a unity to the whole and determined the line of the shadows. Outline is a result of comparison,—moral outline of moral comparison. You cannot compare without an implied standard. The heroes in *Werther, Wilhelm Meister, Tasso, Faust,* are such cloudy, shadowy pictures, because they are essentially sketches of moral weakness without any relief in characters of corresponding power. Albert, Jarno, Antonio, are *not* foils to them—they have not the force which the others want, but are simply deficient in the moral qualities which make the former characters problems of some interest. Certainly, the former are soft, the latter hard. But the second set do not give *strength* as opposed to weakness, but rigidity as opposed to weakness.* What is wanted all along is some dim picture in the minds of Werther, Meister, Tasso, and Faust, of what they *would* be,—what it is which would *lift* them out of the imbecility of their purposeless career. This is the element never supplied. We are presented with a set of contradictions instead of contrasts. Only in Götz is there any picture of strength without hardness; only in Weislingen is there a picture of fatal irresolution that has a real vision of the career by which he might have been saved. The *moral* outline which Goethe's youthful remorse put into this picture has raised it, considered merely as a work of art, in many respects high above its fellows. So far from the truth is it that the poet must have

* Goethe well knew, in physical nature, that soft things should not be contrasted with hard, but with firm. He had (we are not speaking ironically) an exquisitely fine sympathy with vegetable life. Consider this picture of a fruit-basket in *Alexis and Dora* (we quote the graceful version given among the *English Hexameter Translations* published by Mr. Murray in 1847):

> "Silently thou arrayest the fruit in the comeliest order,
> Laying the heavier gold-ball of the orange beneath;
> Next the soft-pulpt figs, that the slightest pressure disfigures;
> Lastly, the myrtle at top roofing the whole with its green."

If, instead of the orange, Dora had laid a cocoa-nut under the figs, she would never have made such an impression on the yielding heart of Alexis.

no moral predilections at heart, that if he has none such, his picture becomes feeble, watery, wavering. Impartiality in delineation, not impartiality in conception, is what is needed. Shakespeare frequently gives no foil to the character whose weakness he is delineating; but he always gives it some clear vision of the nobleness and the strength above it. Hamlet knows what he could do, and dare not. Lady Macbeth knows what she should do, and will not. Antony knows what he would do, and cannot. But Faust has no glimmering of salvation; Werther has no gleam of what he might be; Wilhelm is a milksop *pur et simple;* and Tasso's character is then, and then only, a fine picture if it be granted that he is intended to be insane. It seems to us that no more remarkable breakdown of the theory of the "moral indifference" of art can be suggested than Goethe's writings. His poetry is perfect until it rises to the dramatic region, where moral actions are involved, and a moral faith therefore needed, and then it becomes blank, shadowy, feeble. *Wilhelm Meister* would not have been "a menagerie of tame animals," as Niebuhr called it with great truth, if Goethe had not lost the (never strong) moral predilections of younger days, but had purified his eye and heart for their insight into human weakness by reverent study of nobler strength.

Another criticism which has a real connection with that just made is suggested by the comparison of *Werther* and *Götz*. Mr. Lewes truly says, that Goethe never gives enough importance to the action, the progress of events. He does not develop the characters essentially *through* the action, but on occasion of the action. You do not feel that Götz has *come in* from that last scene; it is too much a series of pictures, like Hogarth's pictorial biographies; the art is much greater, no doubt, if you do take them *in succession;* but the breath of the past has not passed into the present scene, each is almost intelligible in separation. A very great part of the skill in *Werther* consists in the gradual rise of the excitement,—the stages of passion;—still it is a series of pictures; there is nothing to *make* you look back to the past and forward to the future. It might begin almost any where, and stop almost any where, and be intelligible still as a delineation of character. This is so also in *Egmont*. It is less so in *Götz von Berlichingen*, though it is too much so there, than in any other work. The past action is much more worked into the essence of the following scenes than is the case in *Egmont, Meister, Iphigenia, Tasso,* or *Faust*. And the obvious reason is, that the actors have *moral* characters, and so the sense of what they had done or not done hangs upon them throughout; they do not turn up as unchanged in every scene, as if they had had no previous life: they have a sense of the past,

a presentiment for the future. The presence of an implicit moral estimate of the characters does not only help art by adding outline, but the delineation of *moral responsibility* gives many a strong link between the past, present, and future, which is otherwise wanting. Is it not, indeed, the strongest of all links between the past and the future in actual life? Werther's uneasiness grows organically; but it grows as a tree puts out its branches, without memory or reference to its past stages. Egmont does not grow at all. Faust does not grow. Tasso undergoes changes; but only those of a sensitive-plant, drawing in with every touch, expanding at every sunbeam. All Goethe's feminine creations grow; but usually it is the growth of affection only. The only portions of a coherent drama that Goethe ever wrote are the Gretchen element in *Faust*. That is the highest drama in every sense, and one of the most essential elements in it is a deep and true remorse.

After his return from Wetzlar, and publication of *Götz* and *Werther*, Goethe became a famous man. The effect of this fame upon himself was certainly very great. Not only are the letters to Kestner clearly written under great excitement after the publication, but other correspondences which he then began are far more dizzy than *Werther* itself. His letters to the Countess von Stolberg are mostly mystical emotional quavers. This young lady he never saw. They struck up an inarticulate attachment on the strength of *Werther*. He rushes into a correspondence with her of this description: "My dear one,—I will call you by no name;—for what are the names—friend, sister, lover, bride, wife, or even a word that expresses a union of all these names, —compared with the very feeling itself to which—I can write no more; your letter has come upon me at a strange moment.—Adieu—(written at) the very first moment."* And some of these remarkable letters are much more incoherent still. So greatly did Goethe err in afterwards representing *Werther* as setting his mind free from the stress of sentimentalism, that not till after its publication did he fully give way to it.

Introduced by his celebrity as a writer to many eminent men, Goethe began to see and to study a far wider and more various field of social life than he ever attempted to delineate. It might be matter of surprise, that in so freely-moving a plot as that of *Wilhelm Meister* Goethe should not have anticipated the easy sketches of character which Dickens and Thackeray have made so popular, and thus effectively used his large experience of social life;—and he never willingly let a grain of real experience go unused. The reason obviously is, that he had none of the comic genius which makes sketches of *superficial*

* Quoted by Düntzer in his Frauenbilder aus Goethe's Leben, p. 271.

life and manners living and agreeable. His *remarks* on common men and manners and on uncommon men and manners are always subtle, often amusing; but you need to have his personal comments to give his descriptions of these trivial matters any interest; he has not the art of making his characters speak so as to explain their own folly; he cannot give just that touch of caricature by which Dickens effects this; he cannot introduce that background of fine irony by which Thackeray turns them into critics of themselves. He understood every-day German life as well as either Dickens or Thackeray understand every-day English life. Nothing could be much more skilful than his accounts, for instance, of the prophetic Lavater (whom Mr. Lewes most uncharitably and untruly terms a "born hypocrite," quite in contradiction to Goethe's latest and maturest estimate), and of Basedow the educational reformer,—the one a man of real power, spoiled by being a lady's preacher and by the needful devices for keeping up popularity which this involved;—the latter a coarse, self-indulgent, unscrupulous, and exceedingly dirty philanthropist, who characteristically enough had the greatest horror of baptism.* The only element wanting in Goethe's description is, not a perception of that in them which is to us ridiculous, but a thorough perception and enjoyment of the ridiculous part. He can see a full-blown absurdity, but not the delicate transition by which real life passes into unreality. His *Plundersweilern Fair*, and other things of that description written at this time, and his subsequent comic works (such at least as we know), of which Mr. Lewes thinks the *Triumph of Susceptibility* a fair specimen, are mere farces,—ridiculous on the stage perhaps, but tiresome to read. *Bombastes Furioso* gives a good idea of this kind of production, but seems to us more amusing. It is strange that so great a poet had not a quicker eye for the boundary-line between reality and unreality, between things and words; he was never *quite* out of danger of mistaking sham-pathos for true; he had never the eye of a great humorist for the subtle distinction between the ring of hollow and of solid metal in others, not always even in himself. A thin vein of genuine trash turns up here and there both in his compositions and his personal life; to which indeed all men are subject, but which a man with the least humour would immediately have detected in himself and extirpated on the spot. We may take as instances the execrable sentimental device of giving an artificial appearance of life to Mignon's corpse, in the

* Schlosser, in his *History of the Eighteenth Century*, tells us that Basedow had a long dispute with his wife and the clergyman, in which both of them used all possible arguments and entreaties to induce him to give up the notion of having his daughter baptised "Prænumerantia Elementaria Philanthropia," partly, we suppose, in ridicule of the ceremony, and partly as a puff of his Philanthropic Academy at Dessau.

last part of *Wilhelm Meister* (against which Schiller meekly but hesitatingly protested),—or, in actual life, the ponderous sentimentality that induced him, at the mature age of thirty-three, being seized with a taste for inscriptions, actually to engrave on a big stone in his garden at Weimar some lines beginning "Here the lover has mused in silence on his beloved;" nor does it appear that he ever suffered from nausea on beholding it. This sort of unreality was in the atmosphere, no doubt; but Goethe was proof against so much malaria that was also in the atmosphere, that it is worthy of notice—especially in connection with the little *artistic* use he made of his wide experience of contemporary manners—that he was not able to keep himself completely free from *this*. His observations on society, which were very acute and rich and various, he threw into the form of epigrammatic maxims, and stowed them away in every gap and corner—suitable or unsuitable—of his many works. He used them but very little—owing, we think, to the unfitness for successful *manners*-painting we have just indicated—in the really concrete delineation of the times he lived in and the society he had himself observed.

Soon after Goethe's literary fame was established, in the Christmas of the year 1774, he was introduced to Anna Elizabeth Schönemann, whose mother, the widow of a rich Frankfort banker, was one of the very few who at that time ever thought of assembling fashionable society in their houses so often as every evening in the season. To this young lady, so familiar in Goethe's writings as Lili, the poet now transferred his affections. His father and mother had been anxious that he should marry a quiet girl in their own circle, to whom he had been thrice assigned by a marriage-lottery in the picnics of the previous year—Anna Sibylla Münch—but he seems to have thought this an extreme and parental view of the case, in which he could not concur, although in the mean time he was quite ready to be affectionate. To Lili, on the other hand, he was really warmly attached, and for a time betrothed; but neither his father's pride nor his own found it easy to bear the reluctance felt towards the engagement by Lili's friends, who knew that Goethe had neither that amount of money nor of *prestige* to offer, for which, as it is said, not only the family, but the bank itself, had a craving. Poetry was no object. Goethe wrote many of his most exquisite lyrics under the inspiration of this attachment, sending them simultaneously to the young lady and to the newspaper.* It is

* The lovely song, "Warum ziehst du mich unwiderstehlich," was, as Düntzer has ascertained, composed in March 1775, and sent to Jacobi for insertion in the *Iris* at the same time. So of other songs. Of course names were not given; but the entire absence of any reserve in the sentimental life of that period is very curious.

curious to note how all Goethe's finest lyrics cluster round his attachments. Few things else seem ever to waken in him the same tones of *unconscious* airy melody. His other poetry, often exquisitely fine, has the polish of high art upon it,—but his lyrics seem to escape as unconsciously from the essence of the earth and air as the scent from a violet, or the music from a bird. Some of Goethe's finest lyrics sprang up at Leipzic under the genial influence of Käthchen Schönkopf; others, but scarcely of equal loveliness, owe their origin to Frederika; the third, and as yet the richest group, belong to Lili; but curiously enough, the richest cluster, we think, of all,—that which most resembles a lapful of fresh wildflowers,—was written in 1803, when Goethe was fifty-four years old, and is due, we imagine (from what Mr. Lewes tells us concerning the origin of the *Elective Affinities*), as well as the sonnets written two or three years later, to Minna Herzlieb, the ward of the Jena bookseller. The engaged or married ladies he adored appear to have had more of a prose influence upon him. In the present instance, after a good deal of torture, owing to the deliberative elder representatives of both families, a good-natured Fräulein Delf, much given to mediation, procured a tacit consent of the parents on both sides, and Goethe was engaged to Lili. This seems to have on the whole made him unhappy. His sister, who was married and at a distance, took a strong view against the match, and wrote letters about it; the old Rath, she thought, would never so accommodate himself to the arrangement as to make Lili happy; Goethe would be obliged still to live with his father and mother, as the custom was, and a young lady of family and wealth would put the former out. In short, his sister was sure that for *Lili's sake* he ought to break off the engagement, intimating, in fact, as Goethe implies, that she found her own husband but dull company, and that he himself could never make up to Lili for the splendour she would resign. So, after some torture, he suddenly departed for Switzerland, with the two Counts von Stolberg, on a probationary absence, only hinting to Lili that he was going because he could not bear to take leave. It appears to have been his intention, if he could have persuaded himself to endure the pain, to break off the engagement by going on into Italy; if not, as proved to be the case, to return and see what fate should give. It is not easy to imagine, from the style of Goethe's narrative, that all this effort was made for Lili's sake. He admits that she never hazarded a doubt of her own happiness, and was willing to follow him even to America; a solution which distressed her lover extremely. "My father's good house, but a few hundred yards from her own, was at all events a more tolerable condition to take up with than distant uncertain possibilities beyond the

sea." They were actually engaged at this time, and for some time after; and it does not seem very generous or considerate in Goethe to have left Lili without explanation to fight his battles for him with her reluctant friends, in order to try experiments on his own fortitude. This flight into Switzerland, while pursued by Lili's image, gave rise to one or two of his loveliest lyrics. As the heavy white masses of the distant Alps rose up in the early dawn, at the foot of the broad lake of Zürich bordered by gently sloping cornfield-banks, he composed the lovely little poem of which we have attempted to produce an English version. He was at the time debating in his mind his future relation to Lili. We must premise, with Mr. Lewes, that Goethe is untranslatable. Some dim visions of the beauty of the poem may, however, glimmer through this semi-transparent medium.

I suck new milk of life, fresh blood,
  From the free universe,—
Ah, Nature, it is all too good
  Upon thy breast, kind nurse!
Waves rock our boat in equal time
  With the clear-plashing oar,
And cloudy Alps with head sublime
  Confront us from the shore.

Eyes, have ye forgot your yearning?
Golden dreams, are ye returning?
Gold as ye are, O, stay above!
Here too is life—here too is love.

Hosts of stars are blinking
  In the lake's clear cup,
Flowing mists are drinking
  The towering distance up.
Morning winds are skimming
  Round the deep-shadowed bay,
In its clear mirror swimming
  The ripening harvests play.

On the summit of the St. Gothard Goethe felt that German home and love behind him was sweeter to him than all the wide warm loveliness into which the bright Ticino rushed eagerly before his eyes; and he returned, with hesitation in his heart, to Frankfort. Lili, naturally hurt at his unexplained absence, was soon as affectionate as ever, and the poet as happy; but it did not last long. The hurt pride at feeling himself rather tolerated than welcomed by her friends, and the dread of domestic fetters, returned. Gradually he broke the chain, and strove to flirt with other young ladies; but he was miserable. In this restless state he began *Egmont*. An invitation to visit the young Duke of Weimar was very welcome to him. His father opposed his going, and thought it would place him in a dependent position. Moreover, the Weimar friend in whose carriage and company he

had been invited to make the journey never appeared, and his father treated the mistake as an intentional slight. His portmanteau was ready packed, his mind set upon change. His father proposed to give him money for an Italian journey. Goethe consented to go by Heidelberg and the Tyrol to Italy, if in Heidelberg he found no trace of the missing Weimar escort. There lived Fräulein Delf, the mediating lady who had secured the fruitless consent of the reluctant parents to his engagement with Lili. Her head was busy with mediating a substitute-scheme. She hoped to marry him to a lady at the Mannheim court, and connect him permanently with it after his return from Italy. A courier came from Frankfort in the middle of the night to announce the arrival of the Weimar friend and to recal Goethe immediately. Fräulein Delf gave vehement counsel, urging him to decline, and go on into Italy. Goethe was in favour of Weimar, and ordered the postchaise. Long he disputed by candlelight with this lady, while an impatient postillion fidgeted about. At length Goethe tore himself away, apostrophising his astonished friend in the words of Egmont: "Child, child no more. Lashed on as by invisible spirits, the sun-steeds of time travel on with the light car of our destiny; and for us it only remains in calm self-possession to hold fast the reins, and here to the right, there to the left,—here from a rock, there from a precipice, to direct the wheels. Whither we are going who can tell? Scarcely can we remember whence we came." The "sun-steeds of time," with the aid of the visible postillion, took him safely to Weimar. Goethe, reluctant to talk of Providence, intimates, however, that this epoch in his life *was* providential, and that the 'dæmonic' element to which a man ought to concede "no more than is fitting" was represented by his father, his own impatience, and good Fräulein Delf,—all eager to shatter his Weimar prospects. We are not at all sure that the reverse was not true—that the young Duke of Weimar may not have been the 'dæmonic' element at this crisis, while the elderly lady may have spoken the voice of higher warning, if not in her match-making views, at least so far as she resisted the attraction to Weimar. Goethe had now reached the maturity of his powers, and henceforth we shall find his character more distinctly written in his works than in the monotonous circumstances of his external life.

There is no part of Mr. Lewes's book which is more interesting and picturesque than the delineation of the Weimar localities and the new life the poet led. He has himself visited the place, and surveyed every thing with a quick and thoughtful eye. The garden-house on the banks of the Ilm—the larger house to which Goethe removed in the town—the open-air theatricals at

Ettersburg—and the life of the court, are all gracefully and vividly sketched. Far from convincing us, however, that the new life had no injurious effect on Goethe's mind, even Mr. Lewes's apologetic narrative strengthens a strong impression in the other direction. That it made Goethe into a "servile courtier," no one with the faintest insight into the man could for a moment dream. Karl August, the young Duke of Weimar, was a lad of nineteen years—eight years younger than the poet; and though possessed of a strong will and a certain personal fascination, Goethe was far too conscious of his own superiority of mind to become a courtier, had even his temperament allowed it. But it did not. He was a very proud man, and one moreover whose life-long principle it was to resist every encroachment of external influence on his own individuality of character. He never endured interference with himself; but he frequently interfered with remonstrances in order to tranquillise the mad humours of his young master. When Goethe said of himself in his old age, that he had always been conscious of an innate aristocracy which made him feel perfectly on a level with princes, and this too in its fullest measure before as well as since receiving the diploma which ennobled him,—he spoke no more than the truth. He could endure any criticism; but he could not endure any assumption of a right to influence and direct him. When the old poet Klopstock wrote to remonstrate with him—during his first year at Weimar—for the wild life he was encouraging at court, Goethe wrote back a polite reply as brief and haughty in its reserve as he could well have returned to a college companion. And it is as clear as day that the majestic mannerism of his later years was the stiffness of princeliness itself, not the petrified ceremony of a prince's satellite. But nevertheless it seems clear enough that some of the worst tendencies of his mind were fostered by his Weimar life. The man who replied to his dearest friends, Charlotte Kestner and her husband, when they expostulated on the public exposure of private relations, "Ye of little faith! Could you feel the thousandth part of what *Werther* is to a thousand hearts, you would not reckon the sacrifice you have made towards it,"—who surprised Fräulein Delf with the assurance that "the sun-steeds of time were whirling on the light car of his destiny,"—was not the man to be improved by living in a narrow circle of admirers where none of the humiliating and busy indifference of the great world could ever draw his keen eye away from himself to those many high qualities of practical minds in which he himself was comparatively deficient. It was good, even intellectually, for Goethe to have objects above himself; yet he left a social world, in which he must often have felt himself an insignificant learner, for a literary world in which

all the talent was of the same kind as his own, but far beneath it. But, what was far worse than this, the Weimar atmosphere was stagnant with moral evil. Laborious indolence and pleasure-seeking was the great occupation of the greater part of the court. The women had no employment at once so fashionable and interesting as intrigues. "There is not one of them," says Schiller, "who has not had a *liaison;*" and women's influence was the only influence which completely reached Goethe. "The first years at Weimar were perplexed with love-affairs," as he told Eckermann; and what love-affairs! One of them at least with a married woman, whose children were growing up around her to learn that the family-bond had no sacredness in their mother's heart, and that fidelity and purity were far less noble than passion in the eyes of the great poet of their nation. We know well that this was the sin of the century, and may not be in any large measure attributed to the personal laxity of any one man's conscience. But all the more is it to be lamented that Goethe left a social atmosphere where domestic virtue was held comparatively sacred, for one where it was almost a thing unknown. There was indefinitely more difference between Frankfort morals and Weimar morals than between the social virtue of a wholesome busy city like Manchester and that of an idle watering-place cursed with barracks. It was a place, like all idle places, eager for self-conscious stimulants of enjoyment. And it acted upon Goethe accordingly. He became more devoted to that *cultus* of his own character, which would not, perhaps, have been his worst occupation in a court where there was very little so much worth attending to, if unfortunately it had not been the very worst influence for that character that he should thus affectionately nurse it. He never became, indeed, at all deeply infected either with the vulgar selfishness or with the frivolity of court-life. It did not act upon him in this way. He had not been a year at Weimar before he felt its genuine hollowness, and busied himself as much as in him lay with the regular discharge of official duty, and the busy earnestness of artistic creation. Always generous by nature, always deeply touched with the sight of suffering, it is pleasant, but not surprising, to find him giving away a sixth part of his income in charity, and still less surprising to find him doing it in secret, so that his left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth. There never was a man less influenced by the love of approbation: he never through his whole life seems even to have felt the passion strongly agitating him, except perhaps in the flush of the first months of his *Werther*-fame. His pride alone would have raised him above it, even if he had not had so strong a feeling of contempt for the public judgment that he was scarcely shaken by disapprobation, and scarcely

confirmed by approbation. He had a thorough contempt for ostentation. He did not care to hear other persons' approbation of his private conduct, just as he *would* not hear their disapprobation. When he was giving a poor man two hundred dollars a year, no one knew of it; and moreover he continued to give it, in spite of rather graceless and ungrateful acceptance of his charity. He pointed out calmly to his pensioner the unfitness of such conduct, and gave on. The way in which Weimar affected him so unfavourably was not by the contagion of selfishness, but rather by giving him such an inferior world with which to compare himself—by the easy victory it permitted him in active goodness on the one hand, and by the contagion of impurity on the other. Goethe had no active religious conviction, and of all men most needed to look up to his companions: he was in almost every direction, at this time, obliged to look down. "The mind," he said, "is *driven back all the more into itself*, the more one accommodates oneself to other men's modes of life, instead of seeking to adapt them to one's own: it is like the relation of the musician to his instrument"—a remarkable indication that these "other men's" life was on a platform below rather than above the speaker. Goethe felt that his companions were in a sense his "instruments," from whom he could bring forth fine music,—which was, however, his own music after all, not theirs. But he would not have felt so amongst men and women who, even in mere practical power and domestic virtue and devotedness, called forth his reverence as standing higher than himself.

The thing that jars upon the mind throughout Goethe's life, in his letters, his books—every thing he said and did—is the absence of any thing like devotedness to any being, human or divine, morally above himself. God he regarded as inscrutable, and as best left to reveal Himself. The future life was not yet. From all men he maintained himself in a sort of kindly isolation —sympathising with them, aiding them, helping them against themselves, understanding them, but never making any of them the object of his life. The object of his life, so far as any man can consciously and permanently have one, was the completion of that ground-plan of character presented to the world in Johann Wolfgang Goethe. To perfect this he denied himself much both of enjoyment and real happiness; to keep this ground-plan intact, or to build upon it, he was always ready to sacrifice either himself or any body else. To this he sacrificed Frederika's love, Lili's love, and his own love for them—the friendship of any who attempted to interfere with his own modes of self-development; to this he would at any time have sacrificed, had it been needful, the favour of the duke and his posi-

tion at court; to this, in fact, his life was one long offering. There was nothing Goethe would not have given up for others, except any iota of what he considered to be his own individuality. To tend that was his idolatry. And that this self-worship grew rapidly upon him at Weimar, no one can doubt. Only compare the tone of *Wilhelm Meister* with that of *Götz von Berlichingen*. Compare even his letters to the Frau von Stein with his letters to the Kestners. There is a real sense of humility and remorse gleaming out at times in the latter: with all his susceptibility to other persons' sufferings, there is nothing but at most a sense of error, regret at past mistakes, generally merged in satisfaction at his own steady progress towards "clearness and self-rule," pervading the former. Compare the picture of the cold, self-absorbed, remorseless Lothario, held up as it is to admiration as a kind of ideal, with the ideal of Goethe's earlier days. Compare even Wilhelm Meister himself, who is meant, we are told, to be a progressive character, with Werther, who is meant to be a deteriorating character. With all his hysterics, there is far more trace of humility and sense of the wrong he is doing, and even effort to undo it, in the latter than in the former. Mr. Lewes discovers a "healthy" moral in Wilhelm Meister—that he is raised from "mere impulse to the subordination of reason, from dreaming self-indulgence to practical duty, from self-culture to sympathy." This is a mere dream of Mr. Lewes's. Wilhelm seems to us to become, so far as he changes at all, more selfish as he goes on. He begins with a real deep affection, and ends with the most cold and insipid of "preferences," which he is far from sure *is* a preference. He begins with resisting, and yet finally yields to, mere physical passion. He begins with an enthusiasm for at least one art, and ends with an enthusiasm for none. He begins with a passionate love of fidelity, and ends with worshipping Lothario, whose only distinction is calm superiority to such ideas. In short, he begins a kind-hearted enthusiastic milksop, and ends a kind-hearted milksop, with rather more experience and more judgment, but without any enthusiasm and with far laxer morality. If this be Goethe's notion of progress, it gives but a painful idea of Goethe. The only element in which Wilhelm is made to grow better is knowledge and coolness; in every thing else he degrades. You can see that even *Werther*, far more *Götz*, was written with a much distincter feeling of right and wrong, of the contrast between real strength and real weakness, between domestic purity and guilt, than *Wilhelm Meister*. And in purity of thought the change is more remarkable still. Goethe was not infected with the commonplace selfishness and frivolity of court life—he was only driven in upon himself. He *was* infected with its impurity.

His former writings had been coarse; but they were not coarser than the day, not so coarse as Shakespeare, not near so coarse as Fielding. *Götter, Helden und Wieland* and *Götz* are delicate to many parts of *Tom Jones*. But while most of his later writings are perhaps less coarse than his earlier, they are indefinitely more tainting. The fragment of the *Letters from Switzerland* at first intended to be pieced on to the beginning of *Werther*, several portions of *Wilhelm Meister*, not a few minor poems, and parts of the *Elective Affinities*, emulate Rousseau in their prurience. The "plague of microscopes" with which, as Emerson says, Goethe was pursued, follows about every where that aweless mind. Schiller (quoted by Mr. Lewes) says, that "whatever is permitted to innocent nature is permitted also" to the artist; but Goethe gazes away every shrinking reserve of "innocent nature" with bold curious eye. This he seems to have learned in Weimar society. Goethe was in his own life higher, we believe, than he was in his works—fuller in sympathy and generous self-denials for others' sake than he ever makes his heroes to be. But his works betray the moral standard by which he consciously moulded himself,—the absolute prominence in his mind of the aim of self-cultivation—the infinite value he attached to *un*moral self-mastery as an *end* and as in itself far higher than any duty for the *sake* of which he might master himself—the great deficiency of fidelity of nature, and of the purity with which fidelity is usually associated, and the general absence of *moral* reverence. They also reflect the geniality, the large charity, the intellectual wisdom, the complete independence of praise or blame, and the thorough truthfulness of mind which marked him throughout life. Goethe never deceived himself about himself.

During the ten years of Weimar life, before his Italian journey, Goethe's external life had but few recorded events. He was ennobled in 1782. He carried on a correspondence of billets with the Frau von Stein, which are extremely tiresome reading, and were never meant for publication. Mr. Lewes is very desirous to prove that all the trifling was on the lady's side, and that whenever she drew back from Goethe's advances, it was only in the spirit of a flirt. It is not a charitable view. In the complete absence of her letters, we know nothing about the matter. It does not seem so impossible that visitings of remorse and delicacy, and real doubt of the disinterested devotedness of a man who considered so little her other domestic and social relations, may have led, in the earlier years of this connection, to the vibrations of feeling which are reflected in Goethe's replies. There is no need to judge the matter at all. It is almost the only case in which Mr. Lewes paints another in dark colours, without justification, for his hero's sake.

During these years Goethe wrote *Iphigenia* and a part of *Tasso*, in their earliest shape; and worked hard at *Egmont*, besides the composition of the finest part of *Wilhelm Meister*. Nothing is more striking than the infinite distance between Goethe's success in imagining women and men. The feminine characters in Goethe's works are as living, we dare almost say more living than Shakespeare's, though there is much less variety and range in his conceptions of them. His men are often creditable sketches; sometimes faint, sometimes entirely shadowy and perfect failures: they are *never* so lifelike that we cannot imagine them more so. But his women are like most of his lyrical poems—perfect. "My idea of women is not one drawn from external realities," said Goethe to Eckermann, "but it is inborn in me, or else sprang up, God knows how. My delineations of women are therefore all successful. They are all better than are to be met with in actual life." "The more incommensurable and incomprehensible for the understanding, a poetic production is, so much the better," he said on another occasion; and judged by this standard also, almost all his women (the dull Theresa and Natalia in the later part of *Wilhelm Meister* alone excepted) are better than almost any of his men. His men are conceptions badly outlined; his women spring up unconsciously out of his nature, exactly like his smaller poems. Mariana, Philina, and Mignon in *Wilhelm Meister*, Clärchen in *Egmont*, Gretchen in *Faust*, and Ottilie in the *Elective Affinities*, are characters any one of which would immortalise a poet. We think the reason of this lies deep in the nature of Goethe's genius. There is a tiresome dispute whether he is more objective or subjective. He is really as much one as the other; for you find in all his poems at once a vague indefinite self, reflecting a defined and clearly outlined influence which impresses that self. His own mind is the sheet of water which reflects the image, and you see only that it stretches vaguely away far beyond and beneath the image it is reflecting; but what catches the eye is the clear outline of the reflected object in the water. His imagination was passive, not active; it did not, like Shakespeare's, by its own inherent energy mould itself into living shapes, and pass into new forms of existence. It always waited to be acted on, to be determined, to receive an influence; and then, while under the spell or pressure of that influence, it pictured with perfect fidelity the impressing power. Goethe was so far dramatic that he was never absorbed in depicting the mere result on himself, but rather reflected back with faithful minuteness the influence which produced these results. Where (as in *Werther*, and perhaps *Tasso*) he was mainly occupied in painting the internal effect produced, he was far vaguer and less successful than where he

lent his imagination to reflect truly the external influence which had thus deeply affected it. But still it was a passive imagination—*i.e.* one which acted under the spell of external influences, and generally sensuous influences—not one which went voluntarily forth to throw itself into new forms and moulds. Hence, though far the best part of his poems is that in which external objects and social impulses are rendered again, you always find the vague mental reflecting surface by which they are thus given back; you always have both the deep dim Goetheish mirror and the fine outlined object which skims over it. The two never coalesce, as is the case in Shakespeare. If you have a Gretchen living before your eyes, you must have with her, as the condition of her existence, the shadowy Faust whom she impresses. The point of sight of the picture requires the presence of Faust; not because she is delineated *through* the effect produced on Faust's nature, but because you really only see that portion of her nature which was turned to Faust, and no other side. It may be noticed that, perfect as Goethe's women are, they are never very finely drawn in their mutual influence *on each other;* it is only in the presence of the lover who is for the time Goethe's representative that they are so strikingly done. Even their lovely songs only express the same aspect of their character. Indeed it is of the essence of Goethe's feminine characters to express themselves in song. Each of them is a distinct fountain of song. But the current of all these songs sets straight towards the poet himself, who is always in love with these creations of his own genius. As an instance, take the lovely little song of Clärchen in *Egmont*, of which we attempt an English version for our non-German readers:

Freudvoll	Cheerful
Und leidvoll,	And tearful,
Gedankenvoll seyn;	With quick busy brain;
Langen	Swayed hither
Und bangen	And thither
In schwebender Pein;	In fluttering pain;
Himmelhoch jauchzend,	Cast down unto death—
Zum Tode betrübt:	Soaring gaily above:
Glücklich allein	Oh, happy alone
Ist die Seele, die liebt.	Is the heart that doth love.

If Goethe paints two women in each other's company alone, the scene either fails, or they are both talking away to some imaginary masculine centre; and instead of being a telling dialogue, it becomes two monologues. Hence Goethe seldom attempts this at all. The scene between the two Leonoras is the worst in *Tasso*, and those between Ottilie and Charlotte the worst in the *Elective Affinities;* that between Clärchen and her mother in *Egmont* is really only a soliloquy of Clärchen's; that

between Elizabeth and Maria in *Götz* gives no mutual influence of the women—they are simply in juxtaposition.

And Goethe's imaginative power is not only passive,—not only waits to be influenced,—but it is generally a sensuous influence that most easily and deeply impresses it. Hence, he not merely paints special women, but he can always give the very essence of a feminine atmosphere to characters not at all individually well-marked. He is so sensitive to the general social influence diffused by women, that he makes you feel a feminine power at work almost without copying the distinguishing peculiarities of any particular person; he can make a woman a very living woman without being what is called a *character* at all. This is what few can do. Mignon and Philina and Adelheid and Ottilie are women and something more—they are characters, and we should know them when we met them among a thousand. But all human beings are not thus marked characters; and when they are not, most authors in attempting to picture them become merely faint and vague. They depend on special peculiarities for the life of their pictures. Not so Goethe. Gretchen is little more than a simple peasant-girl. She has not a single striking characteristic; yet she is his finest creation. Clärchen and Mariana are a little more distinctively moulded, but very slightly; and yet they too live more in us than most of our own acquaintances. The little play *Die Geschwister* (The Brother and Sister) has a delightful heroine, who is nothing at all more than an ordinary affectionate girl; yet she has more life than would fill out a hundred "characteristic sketches" of modern novelists. It is Goethe's extreme sensitiveness to all feminine influence that gave him this power. *Men* exercised in general no such influence over him, hence his imagination is never impressed by them; he has to string up his powers of observation to draw them by sheer effort, and he seldom succeeds conspicuously even in delineating himself. Werther is scarcely so much a delineation of himself as of a series of emotions by which he had been agitated. Goethe needed to have some fascinating power taking hold of his imagination in order to call out its full powers. Nature would do it; women could do it; but he could not in this way fascinate the eye of his own imagination. He could picture the influences which touched him most deeply; but never, *as a whole*, the nature which they thus stirred. You do indeed get some notion of his men, who are all more or less quarried out of his own nature; but it is not by means of any unique influence which accompanies them every where, but only by a sort of secondary inference from the successive states of emotion in which we are accustomed to see them. Tasso, Werther, &c. are never personally known to us;

we have gathered up a very good notion of them, but the mark of organic unity which distinguishes living influence from the fullest description has not been set upon them. Edward, in the *Elective Affinities* is perhaps the most skilful portrait amongst Goethe's male figures. But Goethe could not outline any character—did not even know the outlines of his own. Where he succeeded, it was not by outline, like Scott, but by a single key-note, usually a feminine undertone running through every thing they say. When that is wanting, the character may be true, but does not hang together; it is a loosely-knit affair.

That Goethe should be called by Mr. Lewes "more Greek than German" struck us with astonishment. But in the special criticisms on his works Mr. Lewes virtually retracts altogether this general verdict. Greek poetry is never the product of this *passive* imagination, that waits for a distinct impression and then reflects back the impressing power. And moreover its *subjects* are as different from Goethe's as its intellectual process. It does not occupy itself with character so much as events. The characters are there more for the sake of the circumstance than the circumstance for the characters. And so too with the gods themselves. There is no anxiety to display their personal characters; they are not explained as in later times; their caprices or their kindness is only a part of the machinery for enlisting human interest. But Goethe makes a *study* of *his* Greek gods and demigods, and takes his idea entirely from the most god-like element he could feel in his own character—his cool self-dependence, and his power of shaking himself free at will from the acute impressions of pain or pleasure. There was nothing Greek at all about the character of Goethe's *intellect*. What Mr. Lewes had in his mind was the heathen element (not specially Greek) in his *character*. The entire superseding of personal trust by self-reliance, the absence of all trace of humility, the calm superior glance which he cast into the mystery around but never into the holiness above him, gave often a heathen colouring to his works; but his cast of intellect is strikingly, distinctively German, far more so than Schiller's. For one whose mind yielded freely to any sensitive impression, he had a wonderful power of shaking himself voluntarily free from all adhering emotions, and raising his head high above the mists they stirred. This power of assuming at will a cruel moral indifference to that which he did not *choose* to have agitating him, is the feeling he has so finely embodied in the picture of the gods which he has drawn in the song of the Fates in *Iphigenia*, far the finest thing in a poem rich in small beauties, but without any successful delineation of human *character*. This last has been so finely translated by a recent

American writer,* and represents so truly a characteristic phase of Goethe's mind, that we give it as a pendant to Mr. Lewes's translation from the *Prometheus*.

"Within my ear there rings that ancient song,—
Forgotten was it and forgotten gladly,—
Song of the Parcæ, which they shuddering sang
When from his golden seat fell Tantalus.
They suffered in his wrongs; their bosom boiled
Within them, and their song was terrible.
To me and to my sister in our youth
The nurse would sing it, and I marked it well.

'The gods be your terror,
Ye children of men;
They hold the dominion
In hands everlasting,
All free to exert it
As listeth their will.

Let him fear them doubly
Whome'er they've exalted!
On crags and on cloud-piles
The seats are made ready
Around the gold tables.

Dissension arises:
Then tumble the feasters
Reviled and dishonoured
To gulfs of deep midnight;
And look ever vainly
In fetters of darkness
For judgment that's just.

But THEY remain seated
At feasts never failing
Around the gold tables.
They stride at a footstep
From mountain to mountain;
Through jaws of abysses
Steams towards them the breathing
Of suffocate Titans,
Like offerings of incense
A light-rising vapour.

They turn, the proud masters,
From whole generations
The eye of their blessing;
Nor will in the children
The once well-belovèd
Still eloquent features
Of ancestor see.'

So sang the dark sisters.
The old exile heareth

* Mr. N. L. Frothingham. "Metrical Pieces, translated and original." Boston, Crosby and Nichols, 1855. A word or two is altered.

That terrible music
In caverns of darkness,
Remembereth his children
And shaketh his head."

The metre, like the thought, has a heathen cast. It speaks of cold elevation above all human prayers.

In the autumn of 1786 Goethe "stole away" from Carlsbad, having received secret permission from the duke, for a lengthened journey in Italy which had long been the dream of his life. Mr. Lewes has made no use of the finely characteristic touches which Goethe's journal-letters of this tour contain. He speaks of them as of little interest. To us they seem the most fascinating and delightful of the prose works of Goethe. They not only illustrate his character, as it showed itself in the quiet isolated study of beauty, but they explain more than any other of his works the common ground in his mind where science and poetry met. We must give two very characteristic glimpses into his character which the incidents of this journey furnish. On his way to Venice he turned aside to visit the Lago di Garda, and took his way down the lake in a boat. A strong south wind obliged them to put in to Malsesina, on the east side of the lake, a little spot in the Venetian territory close to the (then) boundary between the Venetian and Austrian states. Goethe went up to sketch the old dismantled castle. He was absolutely alone and unknown—had not even introductions to any authorities in Venice. The stranger was observed, and soon many of the villagers had assembled round him with signs of displeasure. One man seized his drawing, and tore it up. Others fetched the podesta. Goethe found that he was taken for an Austrian spy sent to make drawings of the strong points on their boundary. The podesta's clerk was threatening, the podesta himself was a captive to his clerk. Goethe was near being sent as a prisoner to Verona to account for his conduct. Instead of feeling nervous and embarrassed, however, he was enjoying the scene, and undertaking to instruct the Italian peasants in the pleasures and pursuits of an artist. "I stood on my steps, leaning with my back against the door, and surveyed the constantly increasing crowd. The curious dull glances, the good-natured expression in most faces, and all that usually characterises a mob, gave me the most agreeable impression." He assured them all, in his best Italian, that he drew for beauty and not for political designs. He explained that they could not possibly see so much beauty in the old castle, which they had known all their lives, as he did. The morning sun threw tower, walls, and rocks into the most picturesque light, and he began to describe the picture to them with a painter's enthusiasm. These picturesque objects being,

however, in the rear of his audience, who did not wish to turn quite away from him, "they twisted round their heads like the birds which they call 'wrynecks,' in order to see with their eyes what I was thus glorifying to their ears." This ridiculous scene vividly reminded Goethe of the "chorus of birds" in the play of Aristophanes, and with intense amusement, he would not let them off without a detailed dissertation on every element of beauty in the picture, particularly dwelling on the ivy which hung about the walls. His presence of mind extricated him from the scrape.

A still more characteristic incident occurs on his voyage from Sicily back to Naples. The ship should have passed the straits between the Island of Capri and the mainland. Evening came on; Vesuvius glowed brightly; sheet-lightning was in the air; it was a dead calm; the captain had missed the course; a very slow but decided under-current was drifting them straight on the rocks of Capri; the herdsmen were visible on the rocks, shouting that the ship would strand; on deck was a crowd of Italian peasants—men, women, and children; handkerchiefs were held up to try and find a breath of air by which they might be saved; the women screamed reproaches on the captain, and all was shrieking and confusion. "I," says Goethe, "to whom anarchy had ever been more hateful than death itself, found it impossible to be longer silent. I stood up, and represented to them that their cries and shrieks were stunning the ears and brains of those from whom alone help could be expected. As for you, I said, retire into yourselves, and then put up your most fervent prayers to the Mother of God, with whom it alone rests, whether she will intercede with her Son to do for you what He once did for the apostles, when, on the stormy lake of Tiberias, the waves were already washing into the ship while the Lord slept; and yet, when the helpless disciples awakened Him, He immediately commanded the winds to be still, as He can now command the breeze to blow, if it be His holy will." These words had the best effect. The women fell on their knees, left off abusing the captain, and fell to prayer. They were so near the rocks, that the men seized hold of beams to stave the ship off, directly they should be able to reach them. "My sea-sickness, which returned in spite of all this, compelled me to go down to the cabin. I threw myself half-stunned on my mattress, and yet with a certain pleasant sensation, which seemed to emanate from the sea of Tiberias; for the picture in Merian's illustrated Bible hovered quite clearly before my eyes. And thus the force of all sensuous-moral impressions is always strongest when men are quite thrown back into themselves." Goethe lay here "half-asleep," with death impending, till his companion came down

to inform him a light breeze had just sprung up to save them. There is no incident more characteristic of the calm self-possessed artist in Goethe's whole life: the "musician adapting himself to his instrument;" playing thus skilfully on strings which were deficient in his own mind, in order to bring out tones of feeling for which there were ulterior reasons; then lying down to dream so vividly of what he really held to be but a picturesque legend, that all the awe of death was held at a distance by the vivid light of that "inward eye which is the bliss of solitude." This one scene brings out the secret at once of the man's vast personal influence, and of the poet's yielding wax-like imagination, more vividly than any incident of his life. We wonder much that Mr. Lewes has omitted to give it.

It was in his Italian journey that his poetic powers culminated, and that science and art met in his mind. You see the meeting-point in his descriptions of what he saw. He fits his mind so close to the objects he studies, that he not only takes off a perfect impression of their present condition, but becomes conscious of their secrets of tendency, and has often a glimpse back into what they have been. Goethe discovered, as is well known, that all the parts of a plant—stalk, leaf, stamen, petal, fruit—are but various modifications of the same essential germ, best exhibited in the leaf. It was a most characteristic discovery. But to understand the mental process by which it was made—to prove that it was not, in him, due to a mere scientific tendency—just look at this glance of his into the essence of a quite different thing,—the amphitheatre, written at Verona: "It ought not to be seen empty, but quite full of men; for, properly speaking, such an amphitheatre is made in order to give the people the imposing spectacle of themselves, to amuse the people with themselves. If any thing worth looking at happens on a flat space, the hindmost seek in every possible way to get on higher ground than the foremost; they get on to benches, roll up casks, bring up carriages, and plank them over, cover any hill in the neighbourhood, and thus a *crater* forms itself. If the spectacle is often repeated, such a crater is artificially constructed," &c. Now this illustrates the way in which Goethe became so great in criticism, so great in science, so great in description, and so great in the more conscious and less inspired part of his poetry. He moulded himself with such flexible mind to every thing he studied, that he caught not only the existing present, but the state which had just preceded, the state which would follow; he caught the thread as it untwined, he caught not the "being" only (*das Seyn*), but the "becoming" (*das Werden*). He had no gift for experimental science. He did not even *believe* in laws of nature that did not make themselves *felt* on the living surface

of things. He rejected "refractional" theories of light with scorn, because the coincidence that certain geometrical and arithmetical properties attach to the laws of colour (and it really is nothing more than a coincidence) did not explain in any way the living colours as they shine upon the eye. What is it to the living perception that the length of the wave is *greater* with the red ray than with the violet ray; does length explain any thing about colour? It is only a sort of inward thread of order running through the phenomena, which is quite independent of the essence of the phenomena as they affect the living organs of man. Goethe had no faculty at all for this experimental detection of aids to *knowledge*, which are not in any way aids to living insight. He thought it a kind of mathematical *back-stair* to optics, which it was mean to desire; you ought to look the phenomenon livingly in the face, and explore its *symptoms* as you do the physiology of a plant or an animal. He used the microscope to detect what is really going on; but he despised an hypothesis which left the physiology of colour just where it was. Indeed, his science and his poetry and his descriptions alike were of the microscopic order; not that they had the *confinement* of the microscope, for his eye ranged freely; but we mean, that he rather pierced nature and life at *many points in succession*, letting in gleams of an indefinite vista every where, than combined all he conceived and saw in one co-existing whole. Look at his finest poems and descriptions. It is the intensely vivid gleam thrown on single spots, not the aspect of the whole, that makes you seem to see with your own eyes what he describes. Thus, in his finest poem, *Hermann und Dorothea*, every touch of description will illustrate what we mean. And the sense of breadth and freedom pervading it is given in the same way by transient glances sidewards and forwards, which open out little vistas of life in many directions, without completing them in any:

> "Und die Hengste rannten nach Hause, *begierig des Stalles;*
> Aber die Wolke des Staubes quoll unter den mächtigen Hufen.
> Lange noch stand der Jüngling, und sah den Staub sich erheben,
> Sah den Staub sich zerstreun; so stand er ohne Gedanken."*

What a vivid *impression* (it is only one or two strokes for a picture, not properly a picture) is here given, by means of pursuing a little side-path of insight into the feelings of horses, and then fixing the eye intensely just on that dreamy cloud of dust in the distance which would most catch the eye of a man in a reverie!

> * And the horses started off home, pricking their ears for the stable,
> But a cloud of dust grew under the rushing hoofs of their gallop.
> Long the youth stood still, and watched the dust whirling upwards,
> Watched the dust settle down,—thus stood he vacant in spirit.

It is always by casting these isolated piercing glances in two or three directions that Goethe produces his vivid impressions. When Hermann and Dorothea, for instance, are walking by moonlight to the village, there is no attempt to paint the scene; but each object, as it comes in view, is made to flash on the eye of the reader. Thus:

" ' How sweet is the glorious moonshine, as clear it is as the daylight;
I can surely see in the town the houses and courtyards quite plainly,
In that gable a casement,—I fancy I count every pane there.'
Then they rose, and went downwards through the cornfield together,
Dividing the thick-standing corn, and enjoying the splendour above them;
And thus they had reached the vineyard, and passed from the light into shadow."

When Goethe returned from Italy in 1788, his genius had reached its highest maturity. *Faust* (his greatest work) was virtually written, though afterwards modified, and not published for eighteen years. *Iphigenia* and *Egmont* had received their last touches, and *Tasso* was all but finished. The really fine part of *Wilhelm Meister* was in existence; all that he added afterwards was a dreary superinduced element of "high art," a painful "hall of the past," — except indeed the religious episode, which is a study from memory, a reproduction of the "experience" of a gentle mystic whom both he and his mother had dearly loved. *Hermann und Dorothea* is the only great poem of any length which he wrote afterwards, in 1796, and it is far the most perfect, though not the richest of them all.

During his Italian residence he had only fallen in love once. He returned reluctantly to the north, like a child from a Christmas visit, feeling that every thing at home was old and slow, and that he, coming from the sweet south, was bringing "gold for brass, what was worth a hundred oxen for what was worth ten." Even the Frau von Stein was tedious; the Italian lady had displaced her. In this mood he fell in with Christiane Vulpius, a girl of no culture and considerably lower rank than himself, who, after being for seventeen years his mistress, became in 1806 his wife. There can be no doubt that he was passionately in love at first, and that this passion ripened afterwards into a real and deeper affection, which had sufficient strength, when he found his heart attracted to another, to enable him to resist the danger and remain faithful to the mother of his child, in spite of serious estranging influences arising from her intemperance. Goethe's connection with Christiane, if judged by the lax morality of his age,—by which alone we can fairly judge him, when we have once admitted, as we must do, that he was in no way morally purer than his age—that, indeed, in his estimate of these matters he had become less pure since his resi-

dence in Weimar,—was surely not the most guilty of his life. It is in its origin that it is most offensive. That he should either allow himself to encourage passion without love, and feel no horror, no self-abasement, but rather immortalise it by using it as literary capital for "elegies;" or, on the other hand, if he did feel real love for this poor girl, that he could endure to write about her to friends in the tone of his letters to the Frau von Stein,—is one of those facts concerning Goethe which makes one feel that a wider gulf divided his nature from purity and fidelity than any merely passionate sins could create. During the first months of his *liaison* he writes, in answer to the Frau von Stein's remonstrances, "And what is this relation? Who is beggared by it? Who lays any claim to the feelings I give to the poor creature? who to the hours I pass with her?" And again: "I will say nothing in excuse; but I beg thee to help me, so that the relation which is so objectionable to thee may not become yet worse, but remain as it is. Give me thy confidence again; look at the thing in a natural light; allow me to speak to thee quietly and reasonably about it, and I may hope that all will be once more right between us." That a man should write in this tone about a woman he really loved, and keep her in so humiliating a position, in which he knew that she was a mark for the contempt of his friends, is hardly credible. And yet, if he did not really love her, that he should have felt no self-reproach and disgust at his own conduct, while he calmly worked it up into poetry, is still more revolting and still more incredible. The truth seems to be that he did really love her, and yet was insensible to the dishonour to himself and to her implied in writing and *thinking* of his relation to her in this way, and permitting his friends' neglect. Mr. Lewes says that Christiane declared later she had herself resisted the marriage. Possibly she may have wished to excuse Goethe; possibly it really was so; but the decision lay with him, and no false theories can relieve him from the charge of permitting a permanent dishonour to rest upon the woman who was to him in the place of a wife. He took her to live with him immediately on the birth of his son, and never again forsook her. But we may well believe, that one great exciting cause for the habits of intemperance in her which caused him so much misery was the consciousness of her miserable position in society,—slighted as she was by the very friends whom Goethe most honoured and loved, Goethe permitting the slight. Schiller never seems to have sent her one greeting in his letters, nor even alludes to her existence; while Goethe's messages to Schiller's wife are constant and courteous. Contrasts of this kind should surely have stung him to the quick, if he really honoured and loved her as a wife.

Since Mr. Lewes's book was published, letters have appeared from Goethe and his wife to Dr. Nicolaus Meyer of Bremen, a medical student in Jena in 1798, who resided in Goethe's house in the winter 1799-1800. The correspondence adds little to what we knew; but the letters from Christiane Vulpius (who in 1806 became Christiane Goethe) confirm Mr. Lewes's conception of her as an uncultivated but not vulgar person; and one or two show great depth of feeling. The editor intimates that they were poorly spelt and worse written; but in those days many ladies of rank had little knowledge of this kind. The letters—both Goethe's and his wife's—are mostly about herrings, butter, and port wine. Goethe's letters are seldom very good. He saved up his best things for type. One does not expect literary merit from Christiane Vulpius. But her letters are simple, housewifely, and friendly. It seems she had a genius for jams, which had in part gained her Meyer's esteem. Parts of one or two letters, written in 1805, during a dangerous illness of Goethe's, give a glimpse of the thread of pain in her life. She tells Meyer that Goethe has "now for three months back never had an hour of health, and frequently periods when one fancies he must die. Think only of me—who have not, excepting yourself and him, a single friend in the world; and you, dear friend, by reason of the distance, are as good as lost. . . . Here there is no friend to whom I could tell all that lies on my heart. I might have many; but I cannot again form such a friendship with any one, and shall be forced to tread my path alone." Seldom, indeed, in these letters, does she express feeling of this kind, which gives it more meaning when it is expressed. She says again, "I live a life of pure anxiety." Then she writes a better account, adding, that though better, she fears "it is but patchwork. O God, when I think a time may come when I may stand absolutely alone, many a cheerful hour is made wretched."* The sentence in which Goethe announces to Meyer,

* We have before alluded to the fact, that Goethe's passion for Minna Herzlieb gave rise to his novel of the *Elective Affinities*, and is depicted in the love of Edward for Ottilie. It seems, now, not improbable that Meyer's friendship for Christiane Vulpius at least suggested the relation of the Captain to Charlotte in the same novel. He must have been at least six or seven years younger than Christiane, as he was born in 1775. But it seems from these letters that the friendship between them had been strong, and not without sentiment. Christiane keeps Meyer's picture in her room, and speaks of the constant pleasure and comfort that she derived from looking at it. It was after, and immediately after, Meyer's own marriage in 1806, that Goethe determined on this step, and announced it to him in the curious form given above. There is no allusion at all to her marriage in any of Christiane's letters to Meyer. She speaks of his own marriage thus: "I have been especially pleased to hear that you have at last resolved to enter the state of holy matrimony, in which I heartily wish you happiness, and believe that you will also be convinced of these my sentiments." Meyer and his wife visited Weimar on their wedding journey: a great chasm in the correspondence occurs immediately afterwards.

in 1806, his own marriage, is characteristic. He speaks of the French occupation of Weimar, and the misery it caused, and adds: "In order to cheer these sad days with a festivity, I and my little home-friend (Hausfreundinn) yesterday resolved to enter with full formality into the state of holy matrimony, with which notification, I entreat you to send us a good supply of butter and other provisions that will bear carriage."

On the friendship for Schiller, and the other influences which surrounded Goethe's later years, we have no space left to comment. Early in the new century, Goethe's growing attachment to Minna Herzlieb seems to have given rise to one of the richest groups of minor poems that he ever wrote; and of one of these so beautiful a translation has come into our hands, that we venture to hope it will at least convey some feeling of the charm of Goethe's little ballads:

The Hill Castle.

Aloft stands a castle hoary
On yonder craggy height,
Where of old each gate and doorway
Was guarded by horse and knight.

The doors and the gates lie in ashes,
And silence broods over all;
I clamber about unchallenged
On the ancient mouldering wall.

Close here lay a cellar, of yore
Well filled with the costliest wine;
With the bottle and pitcher no more
Steps the maiden merrily in.

No more in the hall the beaker
She sets for the welcome guest;
No more for the holy altar
She fills the flask of the priest.

To the thirsty squires in the courtyard
No more the flagon she gives;
No more for the fleeting favour
Their fleeting thanks she receives.

For burnt are the ceilings and floors,
Into ashes long long ago passed;
And corridor, chapel, and stairs,
Are splinters and rubbish and dust.

Yet when on a merry morning
From these crags I saw with delight,
With lute and with wine, my darling
Ascending the stony height,—

Seemed a gay entertainment to burst
From the dullness of still decay,
And it went as, in times long passed,
On a joyous and festive day.

It seemed the most stately rooms
Were prepared for some guest of worth;
It seemed from those hearty old times
A loving pair had stepped forth;

And as if stood the holy father
Within his chapel hard by,
And asked, 'Will ye have one another?'
And we smilingly answered 'Ay.'

And when our hearts' deep emotion
In music broke forth aloud,
Rang out the mellow-voiced echo
In answer—instead of the crowd.

And when, at the coming of even,
In silence all was entranced,
And the sun from the glowing heaven
On the craggy summit glanced,

The squire and the maiden, like nobles,
Shine out in that golden blaze;
Again the goblet she proffers,
And again his thanks he pays.

Goethe seems ultimately to have battled firmly with, and finally subdued, the affection which thus renewed the freshness of his poetry with a second spring of even greater beauty than the first; but the whole story, as he has embodied it in the *Elective Affinities*, is a thoroughly repulsive one, and no mind but one so destitute as Goethe's of natural awe and remorse for the most humiliating class of sins, could have given such experience publicity in a work of art. The book betrays, in spite of its power, some of the diffuseness of age; a very great part of it is devoted to describing the laying down of a new gravel-walk and the making of a summer-house.

In 1816 his wife died; and Goethe's burst of grief was very great. We are told* that he utterly lost his presence of mind, kneeled down beside her deathbed, and seizing her hands, cried out, "Thou wilt not forsake me! No, no; thou durst not forsake me." The verse he wrote on the day of her death has more true affection than all his poems of passion together.

The last sixteen years of Goethe's life were passed in tranquil labour at the completion of his unfinished works. Now and then he wrote a lovely little poem. In 1818, when he was in his 70th year, came one of those little flashes of song which, he tells

* Preface to Meyer's Correspondence.

us, he would in his youth often get up to scribble off in the middle of the night, or write down on the first scrap of paper he found, not even venturing to set the paper straight, lest the little mechanical act should put to flight the flow of the inspiration. Its beauty is quite as strange as that of the poems of his youth. Goethe always loved the song, and said it was of the very essence of himself. Here is a faint version of it, which we insert less as a poem than as a light on the old man's character:

At Dead of Night.

At dead of night I went, reluctant going—
A wee wee boy, across the churchyard-way,
To father's house, the pastor's; heaven was glowing
With star on star—oh, sweetly twinkled they
At dead of night.

Then in broad life, when new impellings drove me
To seek my love—impellings which she sent—
The stars and Northern-lights in strife above me—
I going, coming, drank in sweet content
At dead of night.

Till the bright moon at last in her high season,
So pure, so clear, me in my darkness found;
And with her, willing, thoughtful, vivid Reason
Her light about my past and future wound
At dead of night.

He fell in love once or twice more; and in 1823 was said to be near marrying again. The result, as usual, was *not* marriage, but an elegy—of beauty not greatly inferior to that which the poems of earlier days can show, and which, as his youngest and dearest poem, he copied out in Roman letters on fine vellum, and tied with a silk band into a red morocco cover, in which glory Eckermann saw it. Mr. Lewes, in deference to physiology, unpleasantly and untruly calls the story of an old man's life a "necrology." As a *man* Goethe was never so complete as in his old age.

The only great addition to his fame which the last twenty years of Goethe's life produced was the conversations with Eckermann,—a book which gives to the English reader a far clearer conception of his personal influence than any other of his works. He never runs an opponent through, like Dr. Johnson; indeed, he does not willingly talk with an opponent at all. He rather flows round his disciple like an atmosphere, leaks into you at every pore, and envelopes you in such a calm wide mist of wisdom, that you *can* only say what he means you to say so long as you breathe that atmosphere. There is no possibility of a contest. There is no point to contest. He credits you with

a truth whenever you open your mouth (*lässt das Gelten*, as the Germans say); only he circumvents it with a whole mass of modifying thought, so that it would be easier to bring the air itself to a point than to bring the question you are discussing to an issue. In his old age he recurred again frequently to his religious belief, and some of his most fascinating conversations have relation to it. Goethe had a taste for religion, and a shrewd guess at the next world; but his mind seems to have been quite devoid of personal *trust*. He was perhaps the wisest man totally devoid of moral humility and personal faith whom the world has ever seen. He took the pantheistic view of God along with the personal view of man.* He knew that man was a free and responsible being, but he could not attribute human attributes of any kind to God; he thought the Infinite would be best honoured by merely denying finite characteristics, and leaving Him unapproached:

> "Feeling is all in all;
> Name but an earthly smoke,
> Darkening the glow of heaven."

And not only "name," but *definite* thought concerning God he equally rejected. "No one," he says, "now doubts the existence of God any more than his own;" but "what do we know of the idea of the divine, and what shall our narrow conceptions say of the Highest Being?" And so of immortality also; he believed it as an extension of his insight into nature, but he put it aside as not bearing in any way on this life. "I do not doubt of our future existence, for nature cannot afford to throw away any living principle (ἐντελέχεια). But we are not all in the *same manner* immortal; and in order to manifest ourselves as a powerful living principle in the future we must *be* one." Immortality was no present aid to him; he thought we should wait to rest on it till we had gained it. "To the able man *this* world is not dumb; why should he ramble off into eternity? what he really *knows* can be apprehended." And he was annoyed with any thing that he thought a fuss about the matter.

Speaking of a poem relating to this subject, he says:

"Wherever you went, there lay 'Urania' on the table. 'Urania' and immortality were the topics of every conversation. I could in no wise dispense with the happiness of believing in our future existence, and, indeed, could say, with Lorenzo de Medici, that those are dead for this life even, who have no hope for another. *But such incomprehensible subjects lie too far off, and only disturb our thoughts if made the theme of daily meditation.* Let him who believes in immortality enjoy

* See, for instance, the fine little poem, "Das Göttliche."

his happiness in silence, without giving himself airs thereupon. The occasion of 'Urania' led me to observe that piety has its pretensions to aristocracy no less than noble blood. I met stupid women, who plumed themselves on believing, with Tiedge, in immortality, and I was forced to bear much catechising on this point. They were vexed by my saying I should be well pleased to be ushered into a future state after the close of this, only I hoped I should *there* meet none of those who had believed in it here. For, how should I be tormented! The pious would throng around me, and say, 'Were we not right? Did we not foresee it? Has not it happened just as we said?' And so there would be *ennui* without end.

All this fuss about such points is for people of rank, and especially women, who have nothing to do. *But an able man, who has something to do here, and must toil and strive day by day to accomplish it, leaves the future world till it comes, and contents himself with being active and useful in this.* Thoughts about immortality are also good for those who have small success here below, and I would wager that better fortune would have brought our good Tiedge better thoughts."

In only one sentence do we catch a glimpse of a time when Goethe had looked to God for a Father's help, and, at least for a moment, conceived the spiritual world not as the mere unknown spaces beyond life, but as the inspiring love which shines every where into it. "We may lean for a while," he says once, in speaking of his youth, "on our brothers and friends, be amused by acquaintances, rendered happy by those we love; but in the end man is always driven back upon himself, *and it seems as if the Divinity had so placed Himself in relation to man as not always to respond to his reverence, trust, and love; at least not in the terrible moment of need.*" There had, then, been a time when the easy familiarity with which the young man scrutinised the universe had been exchanged for the humble glance of a heart-stricken child; and he had shrunk away from that time (as he did from every other hour of life when the providence of God would have probed to the very bottom the secrets of his nature), to take refuge in the exercise of a faculty which would have been far stronger and purer had it never helped him to evade those awful pauses in existence when alone the depths of our personal life lie bare before the inward eye, and we start to see both "whither we are going, and whence we came." Goethe deliberately turned his back upon those inroads which sin and death make into our natural habits and routine. From the pleading griefs, from the challenging guilt, from the warning shadows of his own past life, he turned resolutely away, like his own Faust, to the alleviating occupations of the present. Inch by inch he contested the inroads of age upon his existence, striving to banish the images of new graves from his thoughts

long before his nature had ceased to quiver with the shock of parting; never seemingly for a moment led by grief to take conscious refuge in the love of God and his hopes of an hereafter. And so, with his eyes still clinging to the life he left, on the 22d March 1832 he passed away himself, while drawing with his finger pictures in the air and murmuring a last cry for "more light." During the quarter of a century which has intervened, the influence of his writings in England has become great. He has been held up as the wisest man of modern days, and by some half-worshipped as a demigod. And, in truth, his was a light and spacious mind. Let us grant that he was the wisest man of modern days who ever lacked the wisdom of a child; the deepest who never knew what it was to kneel in the dust with bowed head and broken heart. And he was a demigod, if a demigod be a being at once more and less than ordinary men, having a power which few attain, and owing it, in part, to a deficiency in qualities in which few are so deficient; a being who puts forth a stronger fascination over the earth because expending none of his strength in yearnings towards heaven. In this sense Goethe was a demigod:

> "He took the suffering human race;
> He read each wound, each weakness clear;
> He struck his finger on the place,
> And said, 'Thou ailest here, and here.'"

He knew all symptoms of disease, a few alleviations, no remedies. The earth was eloquent to him, but the skies were silent. Next to Luther he was the greatest of the Germans; next—but what a gulf between! "Adequate to himself," was written on that broad calm forehead; and therefore men thronged eagerly about him to learn the incommunicable secret. It was not told, and will not be told. For man it is a weary way to God, but a wearier far to any demigod.

Art. II.—EARLY ENGLISH EXPLORERS.

The Observations of Sir Richard Hawkins, Knt., in his Voyage into the South Sea in 1593. Reprinted from the Edition of 1622, and edited by Capt. C. R. Drinkwater Bethune, R.N., C.B.

Select Letters of Columbus; with Original Documents relating to the Discovery of the New World. Translated and edited by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum.

The Discoverie of the Empire of Guiana by Sir Walter Raleigh, Knt. Edited, with copious Explanatory Notes, and a Biographical Memoir, by Sir Robert H. Schomburgh, Phil. D., &c.

Sir Francis Drake his Voyage, 1595, *by Thomas Maynarde; together with the Spanish Account of Drake's Attack on Puerto Rico.* Edited, from the original Ms., by W. D. Cooley, Esq.

Narratives of Early Voyages undertaken for the Discovery of a Passage to Cathaia and India, by the North-west; with Selections from the Records of the Worshipful Fellowship of the Merchants of London, trading into the East Indies; and from Mss. in the Library of the British Museum. Now first published, by Thomas Rundall, Esq.

The Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia, expressing the Cosmographie and Comodities of the Country; together with the Manners and Customs of the People, gathered and observed as well by those who first went thither as collected by William Strachey, Gent., the First Secretary of the Colony. Now first edited, from the original Manuscript in the British Museum, by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum.

Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America and the Isles adjacent. Collected and published by Richard Hakluyt, Prebendary of Bristol, in the year 1582. Edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by John Winter Jones, Esq., of the British Museum.

A Collection of Documents on Japan; with a Commentary. By Thomas Rundall, Esq.

The Discovery and Conquest of Florida, by Don Ferdinando de Soto. Translated out of Portuguese by Richard Hakluyt; and edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by W. B. Rye, Esq., of the British Museum.

Notes upon Russia: being a translation from the earliest account of that country, entitled Rerum Moscoviticarum Commentarii, of

the Baron Sigismund von Herberstein, Ambassador from the Court of Germany to the Grand Prince Vasiley Ivanovich, in the years 1517 *and* 1526. Translated and edited, with Notes and an Introduction, by R. H. Major, Esq., of the British Museum. 2 vols.

The Geography of Hudson's Bay. Being the Remarks of Captain W. Coats, in many Voyages to that Locality, between the years 1727 *and* 1751. *With an Appendix, containing extracts from the Log of Captain Middleton on his Voyage for the Discovery of the North-west Passage, in H.M.S. "Furnace," in* 1741-2. Edited by John Barrow, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A.

Three Voyages by the North-east, towards Cathay and China, undertaken by the Dutch in the years 1594, 1595, *and* 1596, *with their discovery of Spitzbergen, their Residence of ten months in Novaya Zemlya, and their safe return in two open boats.* By Gerrit de Veer. Edited by Charles T. Beke, Esq., Ph. D., F.S.A.

The History of the great and mighty Kingdom of China, and the situation thereof. Compiled by the Padre Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza; and now reprinted from the early translation of R. Parke. Edited by Sir George T. Staunton, Bart. With an Introduction by R. H. Major, Esq. 2 vols.

The World encompassed by Sir Francis Drake: being his nex Voyage to that to Nombre de Dios. Collated with an unpublishea Manuscript of Francis Fletcher, Chaplain to the Expedition. With Appendices illustrative of the Voyage, and Introduction, by W. S. W. Vaux, Esq., M.A.

The History of the two Tartar Conquerors of China, including the two Journeys into Tartary of Father Ferdinand Verbiest; from the French of Père Pierre Joseph d' Orleans. To which is added, Father Pereira's Journey into Tartary; from the Dutch of Nicolaas Witsen. Translated and edited by the Earl of Ellesmere. With an Introduction by R. H. Major, Esq.

A Collection of Documents on Spitzbergen and Greenland. Edited by Adam White, Esq., of the British Museum.

Here is a list of books the very titles of which are the earnest of a singular feast to those who can appreciate the delight of escaping for awhile from the atmosphere of modern fine writing into a region of simple facts simply narrated. Of all the publishing societies, the Hakluyt has performed and is still performing the most deservedly popular service. This society has had the peculiar good fortune of catering for an interest which is at once general, scientific, and antiquarian. Its publications find an appropriate place on the schoolboy's bookshelf beside Gulliver and Crusoe; in the catalogue of the circulating library

beside the modern novel of the most "startling interest;" and in the study of the historian or the geographer. Any one of the sixteen books we have undertaken to notice would afford "cream" enough for a highly amusing review article. As it is, we find ourselves suffering under an *embarras de richesses.* Our space will scarcely suffice for a *catalogue raisonné* of these works and their contents; and we are in some dread of being compelled to write a dry notice by the mere abundance of interest in our materials. One of the greatest charms of the simple narratives of these "old travellers" is a certain spaciousness and leisurely air about their way of saying things. Without the least pretension to literary art, theirs is in reality the "grand style" of narrative. Their "important facts" stand simply and strikingly in a pleasant wilderness of naïve platitude and commonplace; and Stonehenge, should it ever be brought to London by rail and set up as the central decoration of Trafalgar Square, would not differ more from Stonehenge in the centre of breezy Sarum Plain than these principal facts, condensed in a review article, must differ from the same in their original context. We cannot, however, pretend even to cull the principal facts from a mass like this, where so much is principal. Warning our readers against the injustice of mistaking single bricks for models, or hasty glances for epitomes, we proceed to speak of the Hakluyt Society's publications in order of their issue, reserving our space chiefly for the later volumes, with which the non-subscribing public have had fewer opportunities of making themselves acquainted by means of the Reviews.

The first work of the series is one of the least interesting. If we except some remarks of Hawkins, on the naming of ships, with a history of the christening of the vessel in which he sailed, we can scarcely recommend the work to those who seek mere amusement. It is a curious fact, that Sir Richard was in the habit of distilling pure water from the sea,—a process which most persons, we believe, imagine to be of quite modern invention. "The water so distilled was wholesome and nourishing," we are told. Wholesome it might have been; but the fact of its having been nourishing must rank in credibility with some others which rest on the same authority,—as, for example, the power of the moon's rays to produce "a furious burning pain, enough to drive one mad;" and the liability of water, under certain circumstances, to spontaneous combustion.

The *Select Letters of Columbus* are full of interest and value. Before the publication of this volume by the Hakluyt Society, only one of these letters had been translated, and that many years ago in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review.* No biography of Columbus or history of his discoveries has any thing approach-

ing to the interest of these elaborately written accounts addressed by Cŏlumbus to his king and queen, or to persons about them. Perhaps the deepest impression left by the perusal of these letters—after the first overwhelming indignation at the ingratitude with which his services were requited—is admiration for his single-heartedness and the high motives by which he was actuated in his work. The conversion of the Indians and the extension of the realms of knowledge seem to have inspired him to the exclusion of all consideration of personal advantages either of fame or wealth; and his own nobility throws into deep contrast the grovelling spirits of those by whom he was surrounded. His companions and employers seem to have seen nothing in his great discoveries beyond the prospect of increased wealth and extended dominion. From scores of passages of equal interest we take the following characteristic trait of this great and noble mind:

"They" (the natives of Hispaniola, or San Domingo,) "exhibit great love towards all others in preference to themselves; they also give objects of great value for trifles, and content themselves with very little or nothing in return. I, however, forbad that these trifles and articles of no value, such as pieces of dishes, plates, and glass keys, and leather straps, should be given to them, although, if they could obtain them, they imagined themselves to be possessed of the most beautiful trinkets in the world. It even happened that a sailor received for a leather strap as much gold as was worth three golden nobles; and for things of mere trifling value offered by our men, especially newly-coined blancas, or any gold coins, the Indians would give whatever the seller required. . . . Thus they bartered, like idiots, cotton and gold for fragments of bows, glasses, bottles, and jars, which I forbad as being unjust; and myself gave them many beautiful and acceptable articles which I had brought with me, taking nothing for them in return. I did this in order that I might the more easily conciliate them, that they might be led to become Christians."

The Discovery of the large, rich, and beautiful Empire of Guiana by Sir Walter Raleigh is a work full of amusing matter, and sprinkled plentifully with travellers' wonders. We have accounts of Amazons; of men whose eyes were in their shoulders, whose mouths were in their breasts, and whose hair grew from their backs; of a race who "do use to beat the bones of their lords into powder, and their wives and friends to drinke it all in their several sorts of drinks;" of poisoned arrows fatal to Europeans, but harmless to natives, &c. The editor of Raleigh's work, Sir Robert H. Schomburgh, has accompanied it with materials of his own, which render the entire volume an excellent and most entertaining biography. Raleigh was a fine writer as well as a fine gentleman and a great adventurer; and this volume

abounds in passages of elegant style and vivid description, as, for example:

"That Cassique that was a stranger had his wife staying at the port where we ankored; and in all my life, I have seldom seen a better favored woman. She was of good stature, with blacke eies, fat of body, of an excellent countenance, hir haire almost as long as hirselfe, tied up againe in pretie knots; and it seemed she stood not in that aw of hir husband as the rest, for she spake and discourst, and dranke among the gentlemen and captaines, and was very pleasant, knowing hir owne comelines and taking great pride therein."

Sir Francis Drake his Voyage is a short memorial of Sir Francis by his friend Thomas Maynard. It does not raise our idea of the personal character of the naval hero, who seems fully to have participated in the thirst for gold so prevalent in and about his age. It is often painful, in going through this collection of travels and voyages of discovery, to find how little interest was created in the minds of those engaged in them by the natural and social wonders, so new and so many, upon which they came, compared with that which was awakened by the hope of wealth. Columbus is almost the only person who appears to have been quite free from this disease, though even he—evidently to satisfy his royal employers, who were as sordid as the meanest of their subjects—devotes much time to this subject of gold-finding.

The *Narratives of Voyages towards the North-west, in search of a passage to Cathay and India*, include short notices of many well-known travellers and discoverers in Polar regions. This volume, like several others of the Hakluyt series, is unnecessarily deformed by the ancient orthography. Where the sound was evidently the same, we see no object in preserving the old spelling, which, in this particular case, is so different from the modern mode, as to constitute a serious obstacle to the enjoyment of the narratives to persons unaccustomed to the perusal of early English writings in their original dress. In the present instance this obstacle is the more injurious, inasmuch as the volume is one of very general interest. The most valuable narrative of the collection is that of Captain James, who, like most of his fellow-labourers in Arctic discovery, relates terrific sufferings with an almost amusing absence of self-consciousness. These "marine worthies beyond all names of worthinesse" seem to have regarded all that they saw, and all that befel them, alike as natural phenomena, only worth mentioning in so far as they threw light on the nature of new lands, or tended to unravel the riddle they were attempting to solve. If a freezing saucepan seemed a more apt illustration of the temperature of the climate than a shrivelled body, the former was noted down with due care, and the latter

left to oblivion as a slight accident, and not to the point. Nor are the examples, described in the Hakluyt works, of a more active manhood and hardiness of virtue developed by the dangers and sufferings of Arctic exploration, few. Some Englishmen, whose adventures on the coast of Greenland form part of a later volume, though in danger of perishing from want of fuel, would only appropriate such timber from buildings and old vessels belonging to the company by which they had been sent out, "as mighte well be spared without damnifying of the voyage of next yeare," which year they seemed to have extremely little chance of surviving to see. "We got together," says their spokesman, "all the firing that we possibly could make, except we would make spoyle of the shallops and coolers that were there, which might easily have overthrown the next yeare's voyage, to the great hindrance of the worshipfull company, whose servants we being, were every way carefull of their profite." And so these poor creatures condemned themselves to the scantiest fires and badly cooked food for eight months of a winter, the prospective horrors of which caused them to stand "*with eyes of pitie beholding one another.*" The *Voyage of Master Henry Hudson* has a tragical ending, by no means unique as regards the catastrophe of death by cold and starvation, but happily so in the means by which such sufferings were brought about. Hudson had met with an unmitigated scoundrel named Henry Greene, and, from some kind impulse, after rescuing him from destruction, had taken him to his own house, and allowed him to join the crew of the *Northern Voyage*. This man got up and headed a mutiny, and, with some difficulty, prevailed upon the mutineers to rid themselves of the captain, his son, and such of the mates as were rendered useless by sickness, by casting them adrift in the icy seas in a small shallop, thus condemning them to a lingering but certain death. In the presence of so notable a disgrace to humanity, it is startling to find such a contrast as that of John King, the ship's carpenter, whose conduct was as noble as Greene's was demoniacal. When all the condemned party were in the shallop, this man, who was "hale and hearty," declared his determination to share their fate rather than even passively countenance the brutality of the mutineers by remaining in their company. His companions, who had been able unmoved to consign the condemned party to their horrible fate, were touched by King's courage, and begged him to have pity on himself; but his resolution was not to be shaken, and he descended to his place in the shallop, which was then sent adrift, and was never heard of more. The ringleaders of this mutiny soon met with retribution at the hands of a party of savages, by whom they were surprised and massacred.

The Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia is one of the most entertaining volumes of the series. It was printed by the Hakluyt Society from a manuscript which was before almost unknown. The editor, Mr. Major, has prefaced the history by an excellent account of the disasters which befell the colony planted in Virginia by Sir Walter Raleigh, and has thus given to the volume the form of a complete sketch of Virginian history up to the time of the *Mayflower*. William Strachey, the writer of this "Historie," gives a long and amusing description of the chief, Powhatan, who is known to others than the subscribers to the Hakluyt Society for little besides his ill-treatment of the English colonists. "He is a goodly old man, not yet shrinking, though well beaten with many cold and stormy winters, in which he hath been patient of many necessities and attempts of his fortune to make his name and his family great. He is supposed to be little lesse than eighty yeares old, I dare not saye how much more." This old gentleman maintained a hundred wives, who were summoned from "their severall places" at the chief's pleasure. The Virginians appear to be quite clear from the reproach, that attaches to the North Americans generally, of insensibility to female charms. Their chief happiness consisted in the number of their wives, who were considered to be of far more value than wealth or any other earthly good. Some Virginians, seeking help from the English against enemies who had devastated a town, on being questioned as to what plan they wished to pursue, declared that their only wish was to recover their wives, and they made a free offer of resigning all other spoils to the English. The Virginian wives are described as strictly virtuous, according to the rules of their country, which admitted of the loan of a wife by the husband. The following description of a Virginian woman of distinction, who had been stolen away by one Pipisco, reads like a bit of *Hiawatha* translated into old prose:

"..... Yet is Pipisco suffered to retain in this his countrie a little small kaasun, or village, upon the rivadge of the streame, with some few people about him, keeping the said woman still, whome he makes his best beloved, and she travells with him upon any remove, in hunting tyme, or in his visitacion of us, by which meanes, twice or thrice in a sommer, she hath come into our towne; nor is she so handsome a savadge woman as I have seene amongst them, yet with a kinde of pride, can take upon her a shewe of greatnesse; for we have seene her forbeare to come out of her quintan or boat through the water, as the other, both mayds and married women usually doe, unles she were carryed forth betweene two of her servants. I was once early at her howse (yt being sommer tyme), when she was layed without dores, under the shadowe of a broad-leaved tree, upon a pallett of osiers, spred over with four or five fyne grey matts, herself covered with a faire

white drest deare skynne or two; and when she rose, she had a mayd who fetcht her a frontall of white coral, and pendants of great but imperfect coloured and worse drilled pearles, which she put into her eares, ... and when thus attired, with some variety of feathers and flowers stuck in their haires they seeme as debonnaire, quaynt, and well-pleased as, I wis, a daughter of the howse of Austria."

The *Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America*, published by Richard Hakluyt, may be regarded as a sort of supplement to the *Voyages towards the North-west*. They are short accounts of various enterprises undertaken by different persons. Nearly half the volume is occupied by the editor's Introduction, which, as usual, equals the text in interest, and has the advantage of being in readable English.

The *Memorials of Japan* are divided into four parts. Mr. Rundall's Preface contains a short and seasonable history of European intercourse with Japan,—a subject clothed with fresh interest by discussions and events now going on. This now most exclusive and mysterious of nations was once open to all the world. Christian missionaries numbered their Japanese converts by millions. In course of time, religious excitement became political rebellion; and, after much expostulation and forbearance on the part of the Japanese rulers, Christianity was no longer a tolerated sect, the missionaries were banished, and, as a further measure of security, the empire was closed to the outer world. *The Kingdom of Japonia* follows Mr. Rundall's Preface, and is a short account of Japan written in the reign of Elizabeth. Then comes a curious collection of letters written by an Englishman, William Adams, who in the early part of the seventeenth century contrived to raise himself to a post of distinction under the Japanese government. Lastly, we have various notes collected by the editor from every available source: the whole making up a tolerably complete epitome of what is known upon the subject of this empire. From the document entitled *The Kingdom of Japonia*, which is an extract from the *Firste Booke of Relations of Moderne States*, Harleian Ms. 6249, we take the following characteristics of a people in whom we are likely to become more and more interested:

"The inhabitantes shewe a noble witte, and an incredible pacience in sufferinge, labour, and sorrowes. They take great and diligent care lest, either in worde or deede, they should shewe either feare, or dulnesse of mynde, and lest they should make any man (whosoever he be) partaker of their trowbles and wantes. They covet exceedinglye honour and prayse; and povertie with them bringeth no dammage to the nobilitie of bloude. They suffer not the least injurie in the worlde to pass unrevenged. For gravitie and courtesie they gyve not place to the Spainardes. They are generally affable and full of compliments. They

are very punctuall in the entertayning of strangers. . . . They will as soone lose a limbe as omit one ceremonie in welcoming a friend. . . . They are far from all avarice. The marchantes, althoughe very riche and wealthye, are yet nothing accompted of there; those that are of nobilitie are greately esteemed althoughe they be never so poore. . . . Every one may change his name three times: when he is a childe; when he is a young man; and when he is ould. . . . They have the use of writing and printing, and have had the space of many years; no man knowes certeinely how long. . . . The lawes are very strict and full of severitie, affordinge no other kinde of punishment but either death or banishment."

The editor's notes, at the conclusion of the volume, are perhaps the most instructive portion of it. In one of them we find a very striking and characteristic story. A Japanese lady of high rank, having been forcibly dishonoured by one of her husband's friends during his absence, met her husband on his return with all kindness, but refused to see him alone, until after an appointed time. She assembled her relations and friends, and among them the man who had wronged her; then, leaning on her husband's shoulder and shedding torrents of tears, she declared her misfortune, and begged to be punished with death for her forced crime. Her husband declared his perfect conviction of her purity. All the guests joined him in endeavouring to convince the injured lady of her own innocence; but in the midst of their arguments, she broke from the caresses of her husband, and rushing to the edge of the terrace on which the party was assembled, flung herself over. The author of her misery left the assembly unnoticed, and was found by the husband and relations weltering in his blood by the side of his victim, having committed the usual Japanese form of suicide by two transverse gashes across the abdomen.—Here is another story, equally bloody, but not such "pure tragedy:" two officers once met on the palace stairs, and accidentally hustled each other. The elder man apologised, but was unable to appease the irritation of his companion, who was resolved that death should follow the offence. Finding himself unable to provoke his opponent to combat, he raised his robes and inflicted upon himself the approved suicidal gashes, knowing that custom would compel his adversary to follow his example; and the irascible young fellow had the satisfaction of beholding with his dying eyes his adversary in the same predicament. Whenever a Japanese noble commits a crime worthy of death, he receives a royal order to inflict it upon himself in the above style. All the offender's friends and relatives are invited to the ceremony.

The Discovery and Conquest of Terra Florida was translated from the Portuguese by Richard Hakluyt, and is now

reprinted from the edition of 1611. Its author was a gentleman of Elvas, who accompanied Don Ferdinand de Soto and his six hundred followers, of whose exploits he tells, in all their adventures. Hakluyt seems to have undertaken the translation of this book chiefly with the view of benefiting the unfortunate Virginian colony, being himself one of the patentees under the charter of King James. He hoped, by spreading the fame of the wealth of an adjoining country, to induce fresh adventurers to join those already stationed in those parts. The work was originally called *Virginia richly Valued;* but Hakluyt himself afterwards adopted the more appropriate title it now bears. Mr. Rye prefaces this work with a sketch of preceding travellers to Florida. Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon, described by Peter Martyr as "a grave man, and of authority," visited the country in 1520, and from him we have the following "yarns." First, concerning the Indians of Duharhe:

"These people have a king of giant-like stature and height, called Datha, and they say that the queen his wife is not much shorter than himself. This lord, being demanded why he alone and his wife should attain to that tallness and height of body says, that it proceedeth from violent art, after this manner. While the infants are in the cradle, and under the breasts of the nurses, the masters of that art are sent for, who annoint the several members of the infant for certayne dayes with medicines of certayne herbs, which mollifie the tender bones, so that the bones being presently converted to the softnesse of lukewarme waxe, they so stretch them out in length oftentimes, that they leave the poor miserable infant halfe dead; and after that they feed the nurse with certaine meats of powerful virtue," &c.

The second story relates to a country called by Ayllon Inzignanin:

"The inhabitants, by report of their ancestors, say that a people as tall as the length of a man's arm, with tayles of a spanne long, sometime arrived there, brought thither by the sea, which tayle was not moveable or wavering, as in four-footed beastes, but solide, broad above, and sharpe beneath, as we see in fishes and crocodiles, and extended into a bony hardness. Wherefore, when they desired to sit, they used seats with holes through them, or, wanting them, digged up the earth a spanne deep or little more: they must convay their tayle into the hole when they rest them."

Of the three contemporary accounts of Soto's expedition, Mr. Jared Sparks, in his *American Biography*, gives the preference to the "gentleman of Elvas," the author of the work before us. "Yet," says Mr. Sparks, "whoever follows him closely will be likely to run into ten errors in arriving at a single truth, with the additional uncertainty of being able to distinguish the former from the latter. The narrative is, moreover, disfigured with de-

scriptions of atrocious acts of injustice, oppression, and cruelty; in short, if this narrative is worthy of credit, few readers will be inclined to dissent from the remark of Philip Briet, in his *Annales Mundi*, that it is difficult to decide whether cruelty or avarice was the predominant trait in the character of Soto." Mr. Rye, however, defends the "gentleman of Elvas" and the other writers from the prevalent charge against them of extravagant "romancing," and shows that there are too many points of agreement in the three narratives to allow of the suspicion that they are not, in the main, faithful to fact. "The character of De Soto," says Mr. Rye, "as developed in his position of leader of this remarkable expedition, presents us with an amount of hardihood and courageous perseverance under the most fearful trials, unsurpassed perhaps even by Pizarro or Cortes." With this testimony we have to couple that of Bartolome de las Casas, who, in writing of "the acts and gestes of the Spaniardes in the West Indies," says, "it loatheth me to recount those actes so cursed, ghastly, and bloodie, not of men, but of savage beastes." The general style of this work is a confirmation of Mr. Rye's good opinion of its veracity. From the stirring incidents and striking local characteristics of this volume we extract the following scraps. This tale of a slave-master in Cuba will not be new to all of our readers, perhaps; but all will like to have it in its original dress:

"A steward of Vasques Porcallo, which was an inhabitour in that island, understanding that his slaves would make away with themselves, staied for them with a cudgill in his hand at the place where they were to meete, and told them that they could neither doe nor thinke any thing that hee did not know before; and that he came thither to kill himselfe with them, to the end that, if he had used them badly in this world, he might use them worse in the world to come. And this was a meane that they changed their purpose, and turned home againe to doe that which he commanded them."

At a certain place, called Aymay, "were four Indians taken, and none of them would confess any other thing, but that they knew of none other habitation. The Governor" (Soto) "*commanded one of them to be burned;* and presently another confessed that two daies journie from thence there was a province called Cutifa-Chiqui," &c.

This province of Cutifa-Chiqui had a queen, who interchanged courtesies with the Spaniards:

"And the ladie, perceiving that the Christians esteemed the perles, advised the governor to sende to search certeine graves that were in that towne, and that hee should find many; and that if hee would send to the dispeopled townes, he might load all his horses. They

sought the graves of that towne, and there found fourteene rooves of perles, and little babies and birds made of them."

The *Notes upon Russia* are less popularly entertaining than most of the series. Mr. Major's Preface, which is the most readable part of the book, contains a life of the author, the Baron Sigismund von Herberstein, who was ambassador from the German court to the grand Prince Vasiley Ivanovich, the contemporary of our Henry VIII. Herberstein's notes give a full account of the religious, political, and social condition of the Russians at that time, together with such topographical information as it was in his power to acquire; but his style is not graphic, and his work is chiefly interesting to the historical antiquary.

The Geography of Hudson's Bay was written by Captain Coats, who made several voyages to that locality between the years 1727 and 1751. It is now published for the first time, by the permission of Sir Edward Parry, the possessor of the original manuscript, and is edited by John Barrow, Esq. Beyond what we learn from the diary of Captain Coats very little is known of him. He tells us that he was thrice shipwrecked on the ice, and proves by his hydrographical notes that he was an expert navigator. "These," he says, "are so adjusted, and with such care," that he "willingly submits them to the test of time." And indeed it is found that they are accurate to a degree quite surprising, when it is remembered at what time and with what appliances they were written. In publishing this manuscript the Society carried out the expressed wish of the author; for though the "notes" were made chiefly for the use of his own sons, he also states that he has "committed them to writing least they be buried with him, and posterity be deprived of what may one day be thought of some use." The "notes" are by no means so dry to the unscientific reader as their title seems to promise. Captain Coats had a good eye for land-scenery as well as hydrographical phenomena, and seems to have taken fully as much pleasure in observing the natives of the shores he visited as in attending to the more immediate object of his voyage. There is little real technicality about his work. His remarks on many things are made pleasant by the obvious goodness of his heart. His graphic description of the "Usquemows," and his enthusiastic admiration of their moral qualities, though he allows that occasionally they *did* eat their enemies, are amusing.

"I have often," he says, "thought this people are of the linage of the Chinease, in the many features I think I see in them; their bloated, flatt faces, little eyes, black hair, little hands and feet, their listlessness to travailling, very fair when free from grease, very submis-

sive to their men, very tender of their children, and indefatigable in the gewgaws to please their men and children. I have had some of those toys from the children brought to me by father and mother, to learn them to look at us without trembling. These toys are little pieces of ivory, made in form of all their fishes, all their fouls, all their beasts, all their men, women, and children; nay, some to imitate our ships, our boats, and our men. In short, nothing escapes their notice. . . . . It has been said that these are Anthropophagions. I answer, it is no otherwise than as all the Indians in America do, to sacrifice their enimyes to their god; and then, indeed, they do partake of human flesh. But to say it is a delicate, and that they do it at any time they can gett it, and that it is a favorite dish, I believe 'tis quite otherwise; for my own part, I see nothing in them to countenance such a hellish principle, and do think them as gentle and sociable, and more so, and more unanimous than we can pretend to. That they are idolaters I am perswaided; for I have had a bone deity, which they seldom are without in their canoes. The rising sun summons all on their knees, when you hear such a contrast of vocal musick as comes from the lowest recessis of the mind, with such energy and noble contempt, as lift these people, in idea, above the common level of all mankind; and I dare say they think themselves the favorite people of God, and look on us with more compassion and contempt than we do them. For to what reason can we ascribe that great confidence in them, when they singly and alone have put themselves in my hands, but a nobleness of mind, above the low conceits of mean earthly creatures?"

In matters of decorum and natural breeding Coats declares that his favourites, the Esquimaux, excelled his own countrymen; and, in proof, relates how his own people, rendered over-free by the kind familiarity of the natives, peeped into the abodes of the women, who were unprepared for such an intrusion. The women and children thereupon hid themselves quietly; but the men, proving that their usual gentleness was not stupidity or effeminacy, pointed their arrows to revenge the insult. They were not hasty, however, in letting them fly; and when the captain called off his men, and showed signs of regret, the arrows were put aside, and a perfect reconciliation at once effected. "How mean and contemptible," exclaims the enthusiastic Coats, "must we appear in the eyes of this people!"

In the same volume with the "notes" of Captain Coats, the Hakluyt Society have published *Extracts from the Log of Capt. Christopher Middleton, on his Voyage for the Discovery of the North-west Passage through Hudson's Straits,* and other memoranda of the same expedition; but these do not contain any additions to our ordinary knowledge of the arctic regions.

The *True Description of three Voyages by the North-east towards Cathay and China* is a volume abundant in interest.

It contains an account of the exploits of Barentz, who, in the fifteenth century, circumnavigated Spitzbergen, and made further way north-east than any navigator who preceded or succeeded him. The re-publication of this "Description," with the elucidatory comments of the editor, will redeem from long neglect one of the greatest heroes of arctic travel. Barrow, Scoresby, Beechey, and other writers on the subject of arctic discovery, have never examined this account of Barentz's voyage closely enough to arrive at the important conclusion of the editor, that Spitzbergen was circumnavigated by this Dutchman and his companions. "The first discovery of this country by our Dutch navigators," says Dr. Beke, "is now universally admitted, though formerly the idea was entertained that they had been anticipated by Sir Hugh Willoughby. But that Spitzbergen was actually circumnavigated by them is a fact which, as far as we are aware, has never been adverted to by any writer on arctic discovery. The details of this portion of Barentz and Rijp's voyage are neither full nor precise enough to enable us to follow them minutely in their course; added to which, the maps of Spitzbergen, especially of its eastern side, are still not sufficiently trustworthy to render us much assistance in laying down their track. There can, however, be no doubt that they sailed up its eastern shores, passed along its northern extremity, and returned by the western coast." This important conclusion is illustrated in a long and laborious introduction. The narrative of the ten months' wintering of Barentz and his companions in Nova Zembla is one of great interest. Perhaps none of those who have weathered the polar cold have suffered more than this heroic band, who bore all with perfect patience and cheerfulness, and submitted themselves during the whole time with the greatest willingness to their commander's discipline. After an imprisonment of eight months, when the weather seemed to favour the idea of sailing, the crew "agreed among themselves to speak unto the skipper, and to tell him it was now more than time to see about getting from thence;" but it was with great reluctance and diffidence that they put into execution even this modest resolution, and they were easily prevailed upon by their leader to postpone their return, which, wonderful to relate, was subsequently undertaken in two small open boats, under auspices thus described by Barentz himself in a paper written before setting out:

"There are three or foure of us that are not able to stirre to doe any thinge; and the best and strongest of us are so weake with the great cold and diseases that we have so long endured, that we have but half a man's strength; and it is to be feared that it will rather be worse than better in regard of the long voiage that we have in hand, and our breade will not last us longer than to the end of the month of August;

and it may easily fall out that the voiage being contrary and crosse unto us, that before that time we shall not be able to get to any land."

The little party set forth from Nova Zembla on the 14*th of June*. On the 17th, "in the morning, when we had broken our fastes, the ice came so fast upon us, that it made our haires stare upright upon our heades, it was so fearefull to behold." Their boats on this occasion were nearly crushed by the ice, upon which they were compelled to land, and "forced to drive all the nailes faste againe, and to peece many things;" their sick men lying meanwhile on the best beds they could make in the open polar air. This last fact, however, we only ascertain by means of one of the facsimiles of the curious original engravings, the circumstance of mere suffering not being regarded by the narrator, Gerrit de Veer, as worth writing of.

"The 20 of June it was indifferent weather, the wind west; and when the sunne was south-east Claes Adrianson began to be extreme sicke, whereby we perceived that he would not live long, and the boateson came in to our scute, and told us in what case he was: whereupon William Barents spake and said, I thinke I shal not live long after him; and yet we did not judge William Barents to be so sicke, for we sat talking one with the other, and spake of many things; and William Barents read in my card which I had made touching our voiage, and we had some discussion about it; at last he laid away the card, and spake unto me, saying, Gerrit, give me some drinke; and he had no sooner drunke but he was taken with so sodain a qualme, that he turned his eies in his head and died presently, and we had no time to call the maister out of the other scute to speake unto him; and so he died before Claes Adrianson, who died shortly after him. The death of William Barents put us in no small discomfort, as being the chiefe guide and onely pilot on whom we reposed ourselves next under God."

Are we not right in calling such writing as this the "grand style" of narrative?

Their leader gone, Gerrit and his companions prosecuted their astonishing retreat from the polar regions, and on the *2d of September* they reached Cola, in Russian Lapland; "so that we sailed in two open scutes, sometimes in the ice, then over the ice, and through the sea 381 miles" (Flemish, *i.e.* 1524 miles English).

The practical and unpretentious piety which seems to have governed the conduct of these and other of the old polar voyagers is very remarkable, and strongly contrasts with the general spirit of the contemporary gold-seekers, whom we have had occasion to mention. In a subsequent volume relating to Greenland, we read of a party who had but a few days before them for hunting and laying in the stock of food on which was to depend their existence during the ensuing winter; yet, when Sunday came, they

rested from their labours, "taking the best course they could for the service of God Almighty, although they had not so much as a book with them."

The History of the great and mighty Kingdom of China and the situation thereof, compiled by Padre Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza, is a reprint of the early translation of R. Parke, who undertook it at the express wish of Hakluyt. This work is the first detailed account of China that has appeared in our language. In Mr. Major's interesting introduction to this republication, we are told that the first intelligence concerning the Chinese which reached Europe was derived from a twelfth-century manuscript, containing the observations of two Arabian merchants, who appear to have visited China in the middle of the ninth century. They describe China as being smaller than the Indies, but far more populous, and speak much of its fertility. Tea seems to have been as popular then as now, and is described, not only as the common Chinese drink, but as a specific for the cure of all diseases—a notion which prevailed, as we know, on its comparatively recent introduction into Europe. There appears to have been little in the accounts of these Arabs of a thousand years ago, which would not exactly apply to the Chinese of the present day. Among the facts and characteristics related by travellers before Mendoza, and repeated in this Introduction by Mr. Major, are a few which may be novel and amusing to some of our readers. It is related by one, that ladies of royal blood were interred in a particular spot,—a grassy mountain, on the sides of which all their horses were turned out to wander at liberty for the remainder of their lives. The maids of honour were allowed the same privilege, with the difference that they were provisioned for five years only, after which they were allowed to starve on the grave of their mistress. It is mentioned by Marco Polo, and even by travellers before him, that the Chinese had a paper-currency. A mode of punishing pirates was to make them stand in a leech-pond. As an example of the highly populated condition of China, one writer remarks that "out of a tree you shall see many tymes swarme a number of children, where a man would not have thought to have found any one at all." The same writer notes the practice of town-drainage, a modern innovation with Europeans, and states that "frogges are solde at the same price that is made of hennes, and are good meate amongst them, as also dogges, cattes, rattes, snakes, and all other uncleane meates;" and asserts that "if you aske them what they do thynke of the soules departed, they will answere that they be immortals, and that as soone as any one departeth out of this life, he becometh a devyle, if he have lived well in this worlde; if otherwyse, that the devyle changeth him into a bufle, oxe, or dogge; wherefore

to this devyle do they much honour, praying him that he wyll make them lyke unto hymselfe, and not like other beastes." Matteo Ricci, who had access to Pekin early in the seventeenth century, speaks thus of their inaptitude for war:

"They have no more spirit than women, and are ready to kiss the feet of any one who shows his teeth at them. They spend two hours every morning in combing and plaiting their hair. Running away is no dishonour to them; they do not know what an insult is; if they quarrel, they abuse one another like women, seize each other by the hair, and when they are weary of scuffling become friends again as before, without wounds or bloodshed. In short, they are only formidable from their numbers. The walls of the towns are, at most, but fit to protect them from robbers. . . . . The soldiers are a disgraceful set. The other day they had a quarrel with some Chinese, who were carrying provisions to market, and beat them; the latter went to complain to the governor of Macao, who caused forty soldiers to be arrested and beaten with bamboos. They came out afterwards crying like children. . . . . What can the soldiers be in a country where their position is looked upon as dishonourable, and occupied by slaves?"

Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza was one of a party of priests who, towards the close of the sixteenth century, conceived the wish to carry on the work, already commenced by others, of evangelising China. Through various misadventures they were entirely baulked in their object; and Mendoza, who had devoted much thought and study to the people in whose service he had hoped to spend his life, turned his labours to good account by collecting into one volume all the interesting matter to be found in the writings of those who had preceded him as missionaries. His book, written in Spanish, was published at Rome in 1585; and Parke's translation, now reprinted, bears the date of 1589. Mendoza's work concerning the unchangeable empire has, of course, the advantage of containing little that is not equally true of the present time,—if it was true then, which may sometimes be questionable. Among the "manners and customs" noted by Mendoza, our readers will not fail to admire the poetical equity of the following matrimonial arrangements. "All men and women" who wished to form the tender alliance are described as meeting annually at an appointed place before "twelve ancient and principall men" nominated by the sovereign. Notes were made of the names, rank, wealth, and appearance of the applicants; and when the number of one sex exceeded that of the other, the superfluous persons were cast out by lot, to stand over till the next year, their names being retained in a register, that they might then be first served. Then certain of the ancient men divided the male candidates into three classes,—the wealthy, the tolerably well-to-do, and the poor. The ladies were similarly divided

into the "most fairest," the "not so faire," and the "fowlest." The "most fairest" were then allotted to the rich men, who had to pay a good round sum for their advantage, the price being fixed according to the discretion of the ancient men. The "not so faire" were given gratis to the men of middling means; and the poor men were compensated for their allotment of the "fowlest" damsels, by receiving, for dowries with them, the sums paid by the rich bridegrooms for their beauties. Mendoza tells us that this excellent custom was not practiced by the higher classes, "the lords and gentlemen marrying every one as he liked." To the following account Mendoza says, "let every one give credite as liketh him best;" for, says he, it "is very doubtfull to be beleeved, although I have bin certified by religious men, that have talked with persons that within these two yeares have seene the said women."

"Not farre from these ilands of Japan, they have discovered of late certaine ilandes which are called of the Amazones, for that they are all inhabited by women, whose ordinary weapons are bowes and arrowes, and are very expert in the same. They have their right breast drie, the better to exercise their bow. Unto these ilands, in certaine monethes every yeare, goeth certaine shippes from Japones with merchandise, and they bring from thence such as they have there; in the which time the men do deale with the Amazones as with their own proper wives, and for to avoide dangers that might happen amongst themselves, they deale in this order following. After that their shippes are aryved, there goeth on shoare two messengers for to give advice unto the queene of their arrivall, and of the number of men that are in their shippes, who dooth appoint a day when they shall all come on shoare; the which day she dooth carrie to the waters side the like number of women as they be of men, but the saide women doo first come thither before the men doo disembarke themselves, and every one of them dooth carry in their hande a paire of shooes, or a paire of slippers, and on them their own severall marke, and doo leave them on the sands at the waters side, without any consort or order, and presently departe from thence. Then the men come on shoare, and every one taketh the first paire of shooes that he cometh unto, and put them on; then presently the women come forth, and every one of them carryeth with her him who hath fallen unto her by lot, to put on her shooes, and maketh him her guest, without any other particularitie, although it chanceth unto the most vilest of them all to meet with the queenes shooes, or otherwise to the contrarie. So when the monethes are expired set downe by the queene, in the which are permitted the men aforesaide, they doo depart, every one leaving with his hostis his name, and the towne where hee dwelleth, for that if it so fall out that they bee with childe, and bee delivered of a sonne, that hee may bee carried the yeare following unto his father, but the daughters doo remain with them."

Towards the close of his work, which is of a very miscellaneous description, Mendoza speaks hopefully of the great subject he had at heart, and relates how miracles had already been performed for the conversion of the Chinese. A native who went to Portugal returned a Christian, and decorated his house with a cross, before which he often bowed in the presence of his countrymen. The Chinese, seeing only matter for mirth in his movements before the, to them, unintelligible symbol, determined to pull down and burn it; but no sooner was the notion conceived than the disbelievers fell down dead, and within a few days "all the linage of those dead persons did follow the same way, and not one escaped." The result of this notable miracle is somewhat of an anticlimax. "This miracle being spread throughout all the kingdom, the naturals thereof did set up many crosses in all parts." We wish that Mr. Major, whose geographical learning is well known to be most extensive, had rendered the readers of Mendoza's China the great service of giving, whenever possible, the modern names of the places mentioned by his author. Although the archæology of geography is the professed and main sphere of the Hakluyt Society, its list of members indicates a degree of popularity extending considerably beyond the limits of the antiquarian world, and we think that a few more concessions to the requirements of the merely general reader, such as that we have just suggested, and a modern orthography, by increasing the popularity of the Society's issues, and consequently its pecuniary means, would also increase its power of furthering its scientific objects.

The World encompassed by Sir Francis Drake is a reprint of an extremely rare quarto published in 1628 by the nephew of the admiral, chiefly from the notes of Francis Fletcher, chaplain on board Drake's ship. The editor, Mr. Vaux, of the British Museum, accompanies this reprint with a publication of the original notes by Fletcher, and other documents, throwing important light upon the mysterious trial and execution of Thomas Doughty, an affair by which the character of Sir Francis would seem to be much more deeply impeached than appears from the narrative of his nephew, whose account of this matter by no means agrees with the accounts of others who had better opportunities of knowledge. Our space forbids more than mere reference to these highly interesting documents, and the discerning remarks of the editor upon them. The general features of the voyage itself are also too well known for abstract here. We are much indebted to Mr. Vaux for giving us Francis Fletcher's original notes, which are full of lively description, and abound in curious local details omitted in the transcript of them by Drake's relative, who seems more intent on making his narra-

tive favourable to Sir Francis than on any thing else. Among other sights witnessed by Fletcher, he describes "a faire and large iland," where,

"Such was the infinite store of eggs and birds that there was no footing upon the ground but to tread upon one or the other, or both, at every step; yea, the birds was so thick, and would not remove, that they were enforced with cudgells and swords to kill them, to make our way to goe, and, the night drawing on, the fowls increased more and more, so that there was no place for them to rest in; nay, every third bird could not find anny roome, in so much that they sought to settle themselves upon our heads and shoulders, armes, and all parts of our body they could, in most strange manner, without any feare; yea, they were so speedy to place themselves upon us, that one of us was glad to helpe another; and when no beating with poles, cudgells, swords, and daggers would keepe them off from our bodyes, wee were driven with our hands to pull them away one from another, till with pulling and killing wee fainted, and could not prevaill, but were more and more overcharged with feathered enemies, whose cries were terrible, and their poder and shott poisoned us even unto death, if sooner wee had not retired, and given them the field for the tyme."

The next work on our list, the *History of the two Tartar Conquerors of China*, is a translation from the French of Father Pierre Joseph d'Orleans, a Jesuit, by the Earl of Ellesmere, one of the vice-presidents of the Hakluyt Society. This volume is the most *readable* of the whole series, chiefly because it is a comparatively modern work, and can scarcely be said to belong to the "archæology of geography" at all. It is a lively little historical work of the date of 1688, written with the air of literary facility which conferred a distinctively "modern" character upon French literature nearly a century before the same character was visible in the writings of our own countrymen. But although books written in this manner are the most "readable," it does not follow that they are the most valuable, or even interesting. The presumption is the other way. Smoothness and facility of style are apt to be purchased by the sacrifice of that sincerity and minute accuracy of observation and narration which are the charm of the early literature of all countries; and accordingly the glib and pleasant narrative of Father Pierre is deficient in the "pre-Raphaelite" truthfulness of most of the other Hakluyt issues. It seems to us that the Hakluyt Society have somewhat deviated from the pursuit of their peculiar objects in the publication of this work. Where are they to set limits to their labours, if it be not considerably within the line indicated by this work? Apart, however, from this question, the work itself is a valuable one, and its republication, at a time when Christianity, or at least that which bears the name, has assumed a portentous

interest in relation to the social and political condition of China, cannot be denied to be very seasonable, containing, as it does, the fullest accounts of the Christian mission at its most critical point, namely, the relations of the celebrated Adam Schall to the court of Pekin. Adam Schall, whose mission succeeded that of Matteo Ricci, arrived in China in 1622. His talent and learning, especially in the science of mathematics, made him a person of importance, and a great favourite of the Chinese court. During the troubles which ended in the subversion of the Ming dynasty, and the establishment of the new race upon the throne, Schall maintained his position and influence. In 1634 he was charged, in conjunction with Giacomo Rho, with the task of revising the imperial calendar, in which he was engaged during three successive reigns. Under the Emperor Chunchi, Schall was enabled to raise the Christian mission into that degree of court-favour with which it was regarded before the Emperor Vanlié had been prevailed upon to withdraw his countenance from the mission commenced by Matteo Ricci. Chunchi placed Schall at the head of the body of astronomers; and during the whole of this reign the Jesuits prospered in China. Churches were built, converts made, fresh missionaries invited, among whom was the German Jesuit Ferdinand Verbiest, who was officially associated, in virtue of his mathematical qualifications, with Schall. The relations of the Jesuit and the emperor were those of an entire personal intimacy, owing, we infer, to the extreme skill with which the former "managed" the latter, and abstained from allowing his religious mission to *seem* to take precedence of his official character as "astronomer royal." "The father," says the author of the present work, which is a compilation from the original Jesuit Letters, "never found it necessary to consult Chunchi's whims, or humour his fancies." The emperor, we are informed, took every thing from Adam Schall in good part, and "listened patiently to the frequent and severe rebukes which this faithful servant administered to him." "Even if he did not invariably reform his conduct, he had the candour to confess that he would have done better to follow his advice." We can imagine the secret despair of the Jesuit as to the effectual conversion of such a penitent! A dialogue, highly characteristic, both of the Jesuit and his imperial master, is given literally from the original memoirs of Schall, and an abstract of it may be interesting to our readers, as showing the style in which Christianity was preached and received at this critical juncture of the "religious history" of China. After years of familiar intercourse between the emperor and the Jesuit,—

"'I have heard it said,' began the prince, 'that certain conjunctions of the stars portend certain events. If this be true, as the course

of the stars is regulated, our destinies must be ruled also, and it is useless to take measures to avert that which is inevitable.'

Father Adam, who occasionally took advantage of the emperor's curiosity in observing the stars to teach him the fear of Him who reigns supreme over them, replied, 'Sire, far above all the stars there is One,' &c.

'Can you tell me,' replied the emperor, 'who is this God of whom you so often speak to me?'

'He is an invisible God,' answered the father, &c.

'Pray, mafa,' rejoined the emperor, 'tell me the best way to correct my faults.'

'I have often taken the liberty your majesty allows me, to tell you freely my opinion of your conduct. You will have made a great improvement when you have learned to temper justice with mercy, when you have more consideration for those about your person; in a word, when your majesty will have learned to feel the same compassion for the sorrows of your fellow-men, who are by nature your brothers, as you would wish them to feel for you, if you were in their place.'

When the father had reached this point, the emperor argued that princes, who are accustomed to look down upon all men as their inferiors, are not willing to acknowledge this law of equity; he even confessed that he could not conceive it,—a remark which led the father to explain to him the Decalogue, &c.

'You have convinced me,' was the emperor's conclusion."

It did not surprise us, and should not have surprised Father Adam, to find the imperial dilettante, soon after this discussion, very seriously engaged in a little intrigue with the wife of one of his subjects, which, for the time being, altogether indisposed him for scientific, literary, and religious conversations; nor need it surprise any one, if the Christian missions left off a couple of hundred years ago somewhat after this fashion, that the recent "revival" in the Celestial Empire should have adopted the very grotesque and anomalous aspect which we hear of its having assumed.

At one time the court was busy with a rumour that deeply affected the character of this "well-disposed" sovereign; and was likely, by its scandalous nature, to alienate from him the affections of his nobles and generals. Those who loved Chunchi felt convinced of its fallacy. No one dared, however, to apply to him who could alone clear away the cloud that obscured for the time his reputation. At last the friends of Chunchi begged the Jesuit father to undertake the perilous duty. He consented, and, having obtained an audience, fell at the feet of the emperor, and presented to him a paper in which the state of matters was described. Chunchi read it through, colouring deeply, and, raising his aged friend and councillor kindly, said that the "whole affair had been very much exaggerated."

This Confucian good sense and moderation bore, in fact, too much external resemblance to Christianity not to be a most serious obstacle to its sincere reception. Chunchi never became a convert to any thing more than the morals of Christianity, and only to those, as we have seen, in "intellectual assent." At Chunchi's death, Father Adam was appointed tutor to his son and successor Camhi, a boy of eight years of age; but before the advantage of this grand opportunity could be reaped, there arose a persecution of the Christians, which led to the imprisonment or death of all the missionaries, the martyrdom of five mandarins, and a general breaking up of the churches. Under Camhi, however, the Jesuits re-established themselves in favour, and their faith was again allowed to be preached. In the first year of this permission, namely, in 1671, twenty thousand persons were baptised; and "from that time," writes Father Pierre in 1688, "the gospel has spread so widely over China, that the number of Christians is estimated at three hundred thousand."

The toleration of Christianity by Chunchi and Camhi of course thoroughly ingratiated these potentates in the eyes of the Jesuits, and this "history" is also a sustained eulogy "of the two Tartar conquerors of China."

Not the least valuable part of this volume is the appendix, containing a translation of Father Verbiest's letters. Verbiest was a coadjutor of Schall at the Chinese board of mathematics, and his successor in office and court-favour after the Christian persecution during Camhi's minority had ceased. Verbiest had performed the important and well-appreciated service of further amending the Chinese calendar; the emperor took lessons of him personally in mathematics; and the versatile Jesuist, on being requested by his royal master to superintend the casting of artillery, succeeded so well that he presented to the emperor a park of 320 pieces produced under his superintendence. The greatest of modern Asiatic sovereigns, in order to maintain the energy of character which had secured to the Tartars their conquest, was in the habit of organising hunting-excursions, having many of the characteristics and much of the discipline of Asiatic warfare. These hunting-excursions beyond the Great Wall have since become almost a Chinese institution; and Sir John Davis notices the recent suspension, upon various excuses, of these exercises as a sign and cause of the degeneracy of the modern Tartars. Verbiest accompanied the emperor on two of these occasions, and he describes them at length in two letters. The journey described in the first letter was to a frontier distant "some thousand one hundred Italian miles, of a thousand paces each," from Pekin. The emperor rode in advance on horseback; the prince, his son and heir, a boy ten years old, followed. "After

these came three principal queens, each in a gilded carriage." To these succeed the grandees of the court, and the chief mandarins of all ranks, who, with their "followers and appurtenances," made up a train of 70,000 men. To this singular hunting-expedition, the dimensions of which render those of the famous "hunting" of "the Percie" insignificant, "it was the emperor's pleasure," writes Verbiest, "that I should be attached; partly that I might, with scientific instruments, observe and note the atmospheric and terrestrial phenomena, the latitudes, the variation of the needle, and occasionally the height of mountains; and also that I might be always at hand to answer his majesty's questions as to the celestial appearances, meteors, and such like." The emperor allotted to the Jesuit's use ten horses from the royal stable. Verbiest describes the features of the country through which he passed with graphic detail. All the towns and villages he passed in the great province of Leauton, to inspect which was one of the principal objects of the journey, were completely ruined, having been sedulously destroyed during the late contest, in order to deprive the Tartar soldiers of all hope of a return to their homes. An entirely new road, prepared for the occasion, extended for more than 1000 Italian miles, "as straight and even as circumstances would allow, the earth being thrown up on either side to the height of one foot, very neatly, as a kind of fence, and marked with posts at regular intervals. It was so smooth and well kept that, in fair weather especially, it resembled a threshing-floor, to maintain which condition persons were placed along its whole course, who suffered no one to travel it till after the emperor and queens had passed." Another road was prepared, with equal pains, for the return journey, "the higher ridges of the hills being, as far as possible, levelled, and bridges thrown over every stream, on either side of which mats, with painted dragons, are hung out." The "hunting," however, was not wholly performed on these beautiful roads, the emperor sometimes betaking himself "to unbeaten paths through the mountains for the sake of the chase." As the country through which this *cortège* of 70,000 travelled was desert or devastated, all that they consumed during this journey of 2200 Italian miles had to be carried with them from Pekin. "Herds of oxen, flocks of sheep for daily slaughter, and swine, accompanied us, driven across the country on either side; and all this perpetual concourse of carriages, beasts, and men, although kept at some distance from the royal road reserved for the queens, nevertheless raised such a cloud of dust that we seemed to proceed in a perpetual mist." Prosecuted with scarcely a day's intermission, the journey to the frontier occupied three months. The emperor then selected 3000 men, armed with bows and

arrows. These spread themselves, and closed themselves into a circle of three miles in diameter, which was gradually narrowed to one of a few hundred paces. The horsemen then dismounted, and "setting foot to foot and shoulder to shoulder, they closed in upon the animals they had driven from their dens and haunts. The latter, after running hither and thither, and finding no exit, sunk down powerless, and were easily captured." As many as 1000 stags, besides wolves, foxes, and such "small deer," were sometimes caught in this manner in a single circle. Tigers were often among the game thus captured. This kind of chase was followed without a day's cessation for a distance of 900 miles, at the end of which the hunting-party "enjoyed two or three days' repose." The scientific Jesuit, who was compelled to be constantly by the king's side, though not compelled to take any more active part in the battue, was often nearly dead with fatigue after his day's work. After a further advance in this way of 400 miles, the expedition began to return to where it had left the queens; but bad weather coming on, this immense army covered the clay morasses with corpses of beasts of burden. In concluding his account of this hunting, Verbiest answers those who may be "disposed to ask what advantage could be derived to our mission from this expedition?" in a very characteristic way:

"Inasmuch as this countless multitude of men, during the entire journey, saw me mounted on one of the emperor's horses, and heard me from the same, as from a pulpit, often discourse of our worship, in such manner that I might be said to be preaching to an enormous congregation; for there were few among them who had not their attention turned to the emperor as he passed them from time to time, and who did not also see me in near attendance, distinguished as I was by the absence of bow and quiver, and by my long beard and European attire, they could not fail to observe me with close attention. As, moreover, nearly all knew me, not only as the author of the Chinese almanac, whose name, by means of that book, has been spread throughout the empire, but also as one who professed with singular zeal, the doctrine of Christ; moreover, as one who, after the overthrow and expulsion of Yam-quam-sien, had re-introduced into China the European astronomy, together with the Christian doctrine; all this could not be without including many to ask questions touching the Christian faith."

In the commencement of the second of these highly interesting letters, Verbiest declares that, in these journeys, the emperor had in view "to prevent for his soldiers, and especially his Tartar troops, that infection of Chinese luxury and corruption which might otherwise naturally ensue from the idleness of peace." The Jesuit characterises the Tartars as naturally "a

slothful people, and little disposed to any toil, even that of the chase; they neither sow, nor reap, nor plough, nor harrow." It is to be presumed, therefore, that these expeditions required the energy of an emperor like Camhi to keep them up. "Many," says Verbiest, "who had taken part in the campaigns of preceding years, openly confessed to me that they had never, in actual war, endured such hardships as in this fictitious campaign." The Jesuit shrewdly suggests that an additional motive in these expeditions was to awe the out-lying Tartar tribes by an occasional display of force and imperial pomp. Finally, "it may be added," he writes, "that by this movement the emperor, with the queen-mother, avoided the summer heat, which in the dog-days at Pekin is tremendous."

This amusing and instructive volume concludes with a third epistle on one of these hunting-expeditions by Father Pereira, another Jesuit in attendance upon the emperor. Pereira gives a picture even more vivid than that drawn by Verbiest of the costly pomp of these expeditions, and the odd contrast of the Tartarean deserts with the filagree finery of the imperial *cortège*. Among precipices and tigers, "six sumptuous pavilions were erected, the first for the sole use of the emperor, the others for the queens, according to their rank, all alike of lacquer-work, with tin-lining, seven or eight ells in height. The entrance, after the fashion of the Chinese, faced the south, being guarded from the weather by curtains of the most costly silk damask. . . . The road," in these deserts, "had been so carefully mended, *and also watered*, that nothing more perfect could exist. It makes me ashamed to reflect how imperfect in comparison is my service to God, the Lord of heaven and earth." "Among these rocks every thing is at hand the same as in the palace at Pekin."

From a number of photographic touches, which are admirably effective in conferring credibility and reality upon these descriptions of the next to incredible features of the imperial hunts, we give a few at random:

"In the woods I met with edible mushrooms as large as our hats."

"The soil in these highlands being much impregnated with nitre may perhaps be a cause of their great cold; wherever the earth is dug to the depth of three or four feet, this substance is turned up frozen like ice."

"Here also were found tigers, against which the emperor is so incensed that he never spares them, but pursues them to the death."

"Wheresoever a river occurs abounding in fish, the chase is superseded, and all betake themselves to fishing; and for this purpose camels carry on their backs small boats, made in separate pieces, which are put together and made available in an instant."

"I, who had no other purpose but to drive the game within shot of

the emperor, nevertheless caught an animal between my legs, which much pleased the emperor. Nor is it unfrequent that the wildest animals are thus easily captured, when the circle has once closed in upon them."

"Spits were produced, and large fires lighted, to which some held their portions of meat; others flung the pieces into the fire for a moment, and then swallowed them, still dripping with blood, with great relish."

"In the thickets are white and red onions, which I conjecture to have been brought from Egypt (!). Persian roses are as abundant as thistles or brambles with us."

"On these mountains, which have never before our expedition been ascended by man, trees are sometimes observed which have been injured by fire—a spectacle which greatly puzzled me when I first beheld it. I remarked that this conflagration always begins at the stems."

Father Pereira most ingeniously suggests that this curious phenomenon was caused by the stag,—

"An animal which sheds its horns annually, and at this season is so plagued by the continual itching, that he rubs his horns to and fro with great violence against any substance till he gets rid of the itching and the horns together."

This explanation, he tells us, satisfied the Chinese, who called on him for an account of all out-of-the-way phenomena; and by way of satisfying the Europeans also that there may be something in his suggestions, he adds, "rotten wood gives out a light of itself by night, so that the smallest writing may be read by it."

"By these and like questions I was kept in continual occupation, and by my answers obtained great applause and consideration. One of the great men of the court said to me, 'If we Tartars were to choose another religion than our own, I should embrace yours, because I never put any thing before its teachers but that I receive satisfaction in reply.'"

"It was so cold here that ten thousand horses died on the night of our arrival, the which were not even missed."

"In the middle" (of a high mountain, Pe Cha) "is a lake, said to be unfathomable, but which may rather be said to resist the attempt to fathom it, being always frozen."

In one of the great flocks of sheep that supplied the expedition "were captured two wolves, which kept company with the old sheep and fed on the young."

We cannot conclude our notice of these three remarkable epistles without expressing our regret that the published letters of the Jesuit missionaries of this period, or at least a selection from them, are not placed before the English public in an acces-

sible form. Such a selection, well made and well translated, would be a most popular work.

The last work published by the Hakluyt Society is a *Collection of Documents on Spitzbergen and Greenland.* This volume contains three pieces. The first is a graphic description of Spitzbergen, written by F. Martens of Hamburg, who visited that locality in 1671. The translation before us was made from the German in 1674, and, together with the accompanying tracts, it is now edited by Mr. Adam White of the British Museum. (By the way, let us express our satisfaction that the staff of that institution is able to produce so many really "able editors.") Here, then, we have one genial naturalist edited by another equally genial and more scientific. This first and principal work is divided into sections treating severally of the voyage there and back, and of all the characteristic natural phenomena of Spitzbergen. The short chapters, each headed with the name of some plant, bird, fish, &c., do not promise much; but, after Jessie's famous gleanings, we know of no more amusing little work of the kind than this. F. Martens describes all he sees with sufficient accuracy and minuteness to be of service to the technical naturalist, and yet manages to delight the unscientific reader with the "touches of nature" to be found among the ice and crags of Spitzbergen. Here are a few of our traveller's remarks, taken from scores of others as good:

"There is hardly any difference of cold between night and day; yet at night, when the sun shineth, it seemeth to one that rightly considereth it, as if it was only clear moonlight, so that you may look upon the sun as well as you can upon the moon."

Concerning the crags of Spitzbergen, he observes:

"Some are but one stone from the bottom to the top, appearing like an old decayed wall; they smell very sweet, as the green fields do in our country when it rains."

"On the 6th we had the same weather, and warm sunshine all night. Hard by us rode a Hollander; and the ship's crew, busie in cutting the fat off a whale, when the fish burst with so great a bounce as if a cannon had been discharged, and bespattered the workmen all over."

"All the herbs and mosses grow upon the grit and sand of the stones where the water falleth down, and on that side of the hill which the east and north winds cannot easily get at."

"If it be never so dark by reason of a mist, yet every bird knoweth how to find their own nest again, and flyeth directly to it."*

* Goethe makes a similar observation about the lark, in his *Conversations with Eckermann.*

Concerning certain birds called *mallemucks*, he writes:

"They eat so much of the fat of the whales till they spew it up again, and tumble themselves over and over in the water until they vomit up the train-oil; and then they begin to eate afresh, until they grow aweary of eating. They bite one another and fight together, which is very good sport, about a piece of fat, fiercely, although there is enough for them all and to spare."

Really these mallemucks bear a more insulting resemblance to humanity than monkeys themselves!

There are many curious and entertaining facts about whales and sea-horses, and other monsters of the polar deep; but we must leave room for the *Relation du Groenland*, by Isaac de la Peyrère, the celebrated preadamite, who writes this account to his friend, Mons. La Mothe le Vayer, in 1644, with the object, apparently, of disproving a certain theory of the descent of the Americans from the Greenlanders, and of the Greenlanders from the Norwegians.

This *Relation* is a rambling and ill-written compilation from semi-fabulous Icelandic and Danish chronicles, mixed up, however, with some good pieces of description of the country, superstitions of mariners, &c. Among the facts gravely recorded we find the following Dantesque account of "three sea monsters of enormous size" sometimes seen in the "sea of Greenland:"

"The fish, which the Norwegians saw from the waist upwards out of the water, they called *haffstramb*: it was like a man about the neck, head, face, nose, and mouth, with the exception of the head being very much elevated and pointed towards the top. Its shoulders were broad, and at their extremity were two stumps of arms without hands. The body was slender below; but they have never been able to see its form lower than the waist. Its look was chilling. There were heavy storms each time that this phantom appeared on the water. The second monster has been called marguguer: it was formed down to the waist like a woman. It had large breasts, dishevelled hair, and huge hands at the ends of the stumps of the arms, with long fingers webbed like the feet of a duck. It was seen holding fish in its hand and eating them. This phantom always preceded some terrible storm. If it plunges into the water with its face towards the sailors, it is a sign that they will not be shipwrecked; but if it turns its back to them, they are lost."

Our author tells us, upon what authority we know not, that "the sea of Spitzbergen" produces whales two hundred feet long; and that, when their bodies are opened, "they find nothing but ten or twelve handsful of little black spiders, which are engendered by the bad air of the sea; and also a little green grass." The sea, he says, is sometimes darkened with these spiders, "and it is an infallible sign that the fishing will be good, for the whales follow the water that engenders this pestilence."

The natural history contained in this tract seems to be as apocryphal, for the most part, as the rest of the matter, which is, upon the whole, about the least valuable and interesting of any hitherto redeemed from obscurity by the Hakluyt Society. But, to make up for this falling short, the third and last piece in the volume is one of the most lively interest. This account of "God's power and providence, showed in the miraculous preservation of eight Englishmen left by mischance in Greenland, anno 1630, nine moneths and twelve dayes," is a reprint of an extremely scarce tract. It has been before reprinted in Churchill's collection, but an analysis of it will be new to most of our readers.

The writer of this tract, Edward Pelham, himself one of the eight who passed the most marvellous polar wintering on record, prefaces his narrative by challenging all former tales of endurance and peril in the same kind to compare with his. He makes particular reference to the wintering of Barentz and his men, of which we have already given our readers a sketch, and justly maintains, that the hardships of the Dutchmen's winter were not comparable to those of the eight English. These eight, "being employed in the service of the right worshipfull company of Muscovie merchants" on a whaling expedition, were despatched from their ship to hunt and kill "venison" for the ship's provision. All that they took with them was "a brace of dogs, a snap-hance, two lances, and a tinder-box," with victuals for a few days while hunting. The second day their ship "was forced so farre to stand off into the sea to be cleare of the yce" that they lost sight of her, and they thought it best to hunt along shore, in the direction of Green-harbour, the rendezvous of the whaling fleet. On arriving there, after seventeen days, the ships were gone, nor were they to be found on any part of the neighbouring coasts. Here, then, these men had to winter, with a brace of dogs, a tinder-box, and a firelock for all their provision; the coast and climate being such that, a short time previously, some malefactors who had been offered life on condition of making the experiment of passing one winter at this whaling station, on being taken to the spot, "conceived such a horror and inward feare in their hearts, as that they resolved rather to returne to England to make satisfaction with their lives than there to remaine." Nine men, who had been left by a similar accident and *by the same captain (!)*, were found dead on the following year, "cruelly disfigured by the savage beares and hungry foxes." After a short fit of prostration, they "began to conceive hope even out of the depth of despaire. Shaking off therefore all childish and effeminate feares, it pleased God to give us hearts like men." In order to make the best use of the

very few days of open weather remaining, they travelled back in their shallop to the hunting-grounds near Green-harbour, and succeeded, before the frost put a stop to hunting operations, in killing venison enough to go a good way towards a winter provision. Returning with their store to the whaling station at Bell Sound, with the intention of returning for more, if the weather permitted, they "were overtaken with night. The next day was Sunday: wherefore" (although their very existence seemed to depend on a day's work more or less,) "wee thought it fit to sanctifie the rest of it; taking the best course wee could for the serving of God Almighty, although wee had not so much as a booke." The next day they made small way on account of bad weather. They had to pass a second night on the shore; and, on waking in the morning, saw that both their boats had been overturned, and were "swimming up and downe the shoare" empty of their lading of venison and whale-offal (found at Green-harbour), upon which their only hope of existence depended. Fortunately they managed to recover from the "high-wrought sea" not only their shallops, but much of their provision, a good deal of it much the worse for the brine. With this they at last reached Bell Sound, and proceeded to settle themselves for the winter, which was already upon them. Within a large "tent" or building used by the coopers during the whaling season, these hearty fellows built themselves a smaller apartment, with a Robinson-Crusoe-like thoroughness of comprehension of what they required, and excellent economy of their miserable means, which chiefly consisted of another ruined shed from which they obtained some boards, the bricks of the chimneys of some "boiling furnaces," an old bed, and the skins of the slain venison. With these they constructed quite a cosy and wind-proof apartment within the coopers' house. Their "next care was for firing to dresse their meate withall, and for keeping away the cold." Some "casks and crazie shallops," abandoned by former expeditions of the whaling company, afforded a considerable store; and their provisions were further increased by three "sea-horses" which were opportunely slain. When all had been done, and the winter was upon them, "finding our proportion too small by halfe for our time and companie, we agreed among ourselves to come to an allowance, and to keepe Wednesdayes and Fridayes fasting-dayes, excepting from the frittars or graves of the whale, a very loathsome meate." Some oil, found in the coopers' "tent," fed a lamp which they constructed out of a piece of sheet-lead and rope-yarn, during the long polar night; and thus, "humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and casting ourselves down before him in prayer two or three times a-day, which course we constantly held all the time of our

misery," they passed the time from August of one year to May the 25th of another, when "there came two ships of Hull, and thus, by the blessing of God, came we all eight of us well home safe and sound."

And thus concludes for the present this series of admirably-edited publications. The "Report for 1855" contains a long list of "works in progress," which promise at least to equal in interest those which we have now noticed,—necessarily in a most imperfect manner; for ten times our space might have been well filled by the review of these sixteen issues of the Hakluyt Society.

Art. III.—UNIVERSITY REFORM:—CAMBRIDGE.

Report of the Commissioners for the Reform of the University of Cambridge. 1852.

Correspondence of the Cambridge Commissioners with the Government. 1855.

Bill for the Reform of the University of Cambridge. 1855.

Hansard's Debates. 1855.

Statutes of the University of Cambridge, from the 13th to the 16th century. By J. Heywood. 2 vols. Bohn, 1855.

Cambridge Calendar. Deighton, Cambridge, 1856.

Oxford Essays. J. W. Parker and Son, London, 1855.

Cambridge Essays. J. W. Parker and Son, London, 1855.

The bill for the reform of the University of Cambridge, which will in all probability be again submitted to Parliament this year, as it originally stood embodied to a certain extent the proposals contained in the report of 1852. It was further modified by the Government, in partial compliance with the remonstrances contained in a letter written by five of the commissioners to the Government in the spring of last year, and, as finally amended, contained provisions of the following kind for the reform of the constitution of the University. It proposed, in the first place, to abolish the caput. This body is a committee consisting of six members, holding office for one year. To them all graces, or resolutions, to be laid before the senate, are submitted; any member has a veto upon the measures proposed, and has it thus in his power to postpone them during his tenure of office. The committee is framed in accordance with the ancient constitution of the University. It contains one representative of each of

the three faculties of theology, law, and medicine; one member of the non-regent house, which consists of those M.A.'s who have upwards of five years' standing, and one member of the regent house, which is composed of those who have less; and finally, the vice-chancellor, who is always the junior head of a college. The graces submitted to this body are prepared by the heads of houses, who have thus not only the right of preparing all business for the senate, but have also, through the vice-chancellor's vote in the caput, the power of peremptorily putting a stop to any proceedings of which they may disapprove. The objections to this system are so obvious, that no one defends it; but there is some difference of opinion as to the nature of the body which is to replace it. The government proposed last year a body, to be called the Council of the Senate, which was to consist of four heads of houses chosen by the heads, four professors chosen by the professors, and eight resident members of the senate chosen by the resident members of the senate, half of each of the three constituent parts going out of office every two years. The commissioners wished the whole of the body to be elected by the resident members of the senate, as the corresponding body at Oxford is elected by the congregation. As to its powers, no question was raised. It was to prepare and to approve of all graces to be laid before the senate by a simple majority, and not, as was the case with the caput, by a unanimous vote. The bill also empowered the University to grant licenses to members of the senate to open their residences for the reception of students, who were to be matriculated and admitted to all the privileges of the University without being of necessity members of any college, and to make regulations for the government of such establishments when so opened; and in order to insure the exercise of these powers, it enacted, that if the University did not frame such regulations to the satisfaction of the commissioners appointed by the bill within a year, it should be incumbent on the commissioners to proceed themselves to frame the statutes necessary to supply the defect. The bill also conferred upon the colleges, subject to the approval and control in case of default by the commissioners, many powers in relation to the college statutes and revenues; but it contained no provision for the reform of the University statutes, —a most important omission,—and made no reference to the commissioners' proposal for the institution of a general board of studies. The bill further enacted, that no oaths or subscriptions shall be necessary for any lay degree; but that no person shall become a member of the senate unless he has signed a declaration of membership of the Church of England,—an unnecessary restriction, which concedes the principle, and takes away the

grace of the concession. Coupling this, however, with the power which Dissenters will have under the statute of opening halls of their own, the question may be considered as practically, though most ungracefully, settled, at least for the present.

The solution of the questions at issue between the commissioners and the Government is so inextricably mixed up with the more general question of the functions of the University, that we do not propose to discuss them in detail. Contenting ourselves with the general statement that we are on the whole decidedly in favour of the adoption of the recommendations of the commissioners, we will go on to state the principles which have led us to that conclusion.

The general object of the bill, when amended as proposed, is the transfer of the government of the University from the heads of houses to the resident members of the senate. This has been represented as being nothing more than a contest between what Lord Lyndhurst calls the "grave" and the "youthful" elements in that body. We can well understand the policy of representing the question as being merely one between Conservative and Liberal; but this is not the way to arrive at the merits of any question, least of all such a question as this. Indeed, to any one whose recollections of Cambridge are somewhat more recent than those of the strange old man who, having passed that extreme limit of human life at which strength is but labour and trouble, retains almost all the strength and eloquence which were so conspicuous in the last generation but one,—to younger men, the notion of a wild democracy of resident masters of arts is a great deal more strange than that of a frantic mob of quakers, or a bloodthirsty crew of orators from Exeter Hall. The sheep whom his lordship's imagination invests with wolves' clothing are by taste and habit amongst the most conservative of mankind, and are about as likely to injure the constitution of the body to which they belong by rash reforms, as the ingenuous youth who come up to college from year to year to justify their mothers' alarms by over-application to their studies. We do not like to substitute generalities for facts; but it would be much more like the truth to say that the real question at issue is a question between the colleges represented by the heads of houses, and the University represented by the members of the senate. We believe the question to be one which goes to the very root of all University reform, and that upon its solution the whole character of Cambridge education will depend.

Whoever reads the Elizabethan statutes—still, be it remembered, nominally in force—will be struck by the circumstance that their object is to effect something which no one now attempts. They prescribe a regular curriculum, enforced by

acts, opponencies, responsions, and attendance upon University lectures, to which the college instruction is considered as entirely subordinate. In short, they recognise examinations, of whatever kind, only as means to an end, and look upon the University, to use the words of the commissioners, as "an educating, and not a prize-giving body." Competitive examinations, and the whole system of "honours," is of very recent origin. It has grown up since 1746 or 47, in which year the first mathematical honour list was published; but it has been so much extended by the establishment of the classical tripos in 1824, of the natural and moral science triposes in 1851, and by the accumulation of a variety of prizes and University scholarships, that whatever education is now given at Cambridge is given exclusively by means of competitive examinations. It is not at first sight apparent how this is connected with the predominance of the colleges over the University; but the fact may be easily explained.

A system which places success entirely in passing certain tests with distinction, necessarily increases the influence of the colleges, as the college authorities are of necessity better acquainted with their own pupils than professors can be. The consequence of this has been, that the college lectures have almost entirely superseded those given by the professors of the University; and by the operation of a precisely similar cause, they have been themselves, to a great degree, superseded by the instruction given by private tutors. Thus Mr. Cooper, late tutor of Trinity, says:

"The lecturers' functions are superseded to a considerable extent by the private tutors. The competition for university honours is so great, that the students eagerly seize upon any advantage which can improve their prospect of success; and as the private tutor can devote more of his time to the individual student, and carry him more rapidly and with less exertion over his field of study, they lean more upon his assistance than that of the college lecturer. In the present state of our mathematical examinations for honours, I believe that it cannot be otherwise. I do not think that the higher classes of students could acquire that readiness in displaying the knowledge they possess which the work of the senate-house demands, without some private assistance in addition to college lectures." *Evidence*, p. 153.

Indeed, when the object is to introduce into the mind of the student a definite quantity of information, reproducible on short notice in a certain specific form, the system of private tuition will of necessity supersede all others. Of course, when such a system is fully carried out, the University is reduced to a mere examining-board, and, as far as direct instruction is concerned, the undergraduates might as well come up to London once a year,

for a week at a time, to be examined, as live at Cambridge. Upon the effect of this system on the students we may quote the following passages from the evidence of Dr. Philpott, the Master of Catharine Hall, and from Dr. Whewell, the Master of Trinity College:

"I believe that the notion prevails extensively among the students that the continued assistance of a private tutor is indispensable for the attainment of high honours; but I think that this notion does not rest on any good foundation. I am inclined to think, on the contrary, that the continued reliance on a private tutor is in many cases of great injury to the student, and that much sounder and more knowledge would have been acquired [of this we have no doubt], and a higher honour gained [this is contradicted by universal experience], if the student could have been persuaded to rely more on his own strength and resources, and either to depend altogether for guidance and assistance on his college tutor, or to have recourse only occasionally, and towards the end of his course, to the help of private tuition. Instances occur repeatedly of failure to obtain high honours in the case of students who have had the benefit (as they consider it) of continued private tuition, and instances are also to be found [Mr. Cooper expressly contradicts this] in sufficient number to prove the advantage of reliance on a student's own personal exertion, in which high honours have been gained by students who have had little or no private tuition."

The following are the remarks of Dr. Whewell on the same subject:

"At present, most of the students have private tutors during the greater part of the time that they are here, at an expense of from forty to sixty guineas a-year. It would much improve the influence of our Cambridge education upon the minds of the students if they were not commonly allowed to have private tutors, especially during the latter part of their undergraduateship; for the dependence on private tutors enfeebles the mind and depraves the habits of study; and the private tutor's instructions having for their object merely the student's success in a coming examination, without the more general or dignified tone which public teaching naturally assumes, lower the character of our teaching."

Dr. Whewell further observes:

"I began to speak of this subject as a matter of expense; but if I may here pursue it with reference to its other defects, which are made the subjects of inquiry also, I may add my very decided opinion that no system of education which is governed entirely, or even mainly, by examinations occupying short times with long intervening intervals, can ever be otherwise than a bad mental discipline. Intellectual education requires that the mind should be habitually employed in the acquisition of knowledge, with a certain considerable degree of clear insight and independent activity. This is universally promoted by the

daily teaching of the lecture-room, with the sympathy and interest that the mutual action of various minds produces; it is not necessarily or greatly promoted by the prospect of an examination. It is true, however, that in the lecture-room, according to the *present* habitual temper of Englishmen (for I do not think it was always so, nor need be always so), many students would be inert and idle, and these may be stimulated by the hope of honour, or the fear of disgrace, in an examination; and undoubtedly college examinations or university examinations, since their institution (for both are of recent date), have been accompanied with great activity in college and university studies on the part of many, and with some exertion on the part even of the most idle, when the fear of disgrace has been applied to produce this effect. *But the influence of our English university education would be utterly degraded, if examinations and their consequences were to supersede the influence of the college lecture-rooms;* or if college lecture-rooms were to attempt to make their claim to respect and regard depend solely upon their being the successful rivals of private tutors in preparing students for university examinations."

These quotations sufficiently illustrate one ground of the connection between the system of educating by competitive examination and the predominance of the colleges over the University. A link of equal, if not of greater power is to be found in the weight which success in the University examinations has in the college elections to fellowships. However much it may be regretted, there can be no sort of doubt that the prospect of obtaining fellowships is the power by which the whole education of the University is worked. With the important exception of Trinity College, the distribution of fellowships depends almost entirely on the degrees obtained by the candidates; so that the result of the whole system is, in a few words, that the office of the University is to provide tests, for which the students are prepared by private tutors, and by which the distribution of college emoluments is regulated. It is obvious, that this state of things must be greatly promoted by throwing the whole government of the Universities into the hands of a body which represents the colleges and nothing else. It is because we believe that it has a tendency to break up this system, that we hope to see the fullest effect given by parliament to the recommendations of the commissioners. It would be impossible within our limits to discuss all the changes which may be expected—very gradually, no doubt—to flow from the reforms, of which we look upon the present bill as the first instalment and the indispensable condition. We will confine ourselves to an attempt to show how homogeneous are the defects of the existing state of things, and how closely all prospect of substituting a real education for the present system is connected with every measure which tends to give the University a voice, we had almost said an existence.

A plan of education prepared with a view to competitive examinations—to which the colleges will always be devoted while competitive examinations measure their comparative success—has two capital defects: it influences only a very small proportion of those who are submitted to it; and it addresses itself to the lowest parts of their intellectual and moral characters. If we suppose that twice as many persons are candidates for such honours as actually obtain them, and if we add a certain number who are more or less influenced by the fear of being "plucked," we should arrive at the total number of persons to whom the influence of the examinations extends. It is obvious that it is very much less than the total number of persons examined, and that those who are not influenced are precisely those to whom the guidance of others would be most valuable. A large proportion of the undergraduates are, of course, to a very considerable extent idle and self-indulgent; a good many are absolutely stupid; a few are energetic and clever. It probably matters little whether you succeed or not in driving into the head of a thoroughly stupid man as much Greek as will enable him to see that the authorised version of the New Testament is a translation, and as much mathematics as will enable him to remember for about a fortnight before and after his degree examination that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, and that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third;—all that can be really done for such a person is, to give him encouragement to pass his three years inoffensively, and to receive the indirect influence of the University kindly. Nor do we think that there is any very particular use in giving some ten or fifteen remarkably energetic youths a certificate that they have displayed great diligence, much readiness, considerable coolness, and an aptitude for acquiring and reproducing particular kinds of knowledge,—they are pretty sure to make these facts sufficiently apparent to all whom they may concern in the ordinary transactions of life; but there is a very large class of persons who are by no means stupid, by no means indocile, and yet not qualified by nature either for keen personal competition or for continuous self-sustained exertion. These persons will be diligent if they are taught, and will be idle if they are not taught; and upon their diligence or idleness depends the question whether the years which they spend at college shall be amongst the most useful or amongst the most useless years in their lives. The system of examinations directs its attention exclusively to the first two classes, and altogether fails to influence the last. If a man is ready, shrewd, self-reliant, and energetic, it stimulates him into unnatural and often injurious activity in a contracted sphere. If he is extremely stupid, it plagues him into an effort, the effects of which disappear as soon as it has

been made, whilst the effort itself is remembered only as a disagreeable episode in his life; but if he is just of that character which most requires and would be most benefited by a teaching and guidance which would excite his attention and win his respect, it either leaves him altogether uninfluenced, or inspires him with a low easily gratified ambition, leading to the acquisition of those second-rate honours which seem to have been devised for the express purpose of fostering vanity without attesting merit.

The influence of these examinations, restricted as it is, is not by any means of the healthiest kind. Their natural result is, that the end is entirely lost sight of in the means. Men try to get knowledge, not for the sake of the knowledge, nor for the sake of the mental discipline which is given by its acquisition, but because knowledge gives marks, and marks lead to fellowships. Hence the tendency of a system of examinations is to confine all education to those subjects which are best fitted for that purpose. The curriculum is confined in the first place to mathematics and classics. The mathematics have a natural tendency to dwindle into analytical tricks, and the classics to run into mere philology. This was so strongly felt at Cambridge, that some time since a board of mathematical studies was appointed for the express purpose of controlling the natural eagerness of the examiners to set an undue value upon mere feats of strength as contrasted with sound scientific knowledge. The remedy was creditable to the University; but it is obvious that it was calculated only to repress a particular symptom of a disease which, in one form or another, must always be the consequence of a system based exclusively on competitive examinations. Further and most significant illustrations of this fact are to be found in the miserable failure of the moral and natural science triposes established some years since. Whatever opinions may be entertained as to the utility of such studies, as compared to classics and mathematics, no one, we suppose, will doubt that they are in themselves more likely to attract the attention of young men; but this has been so little the case, that the number of persons who have taken honours in the moral science tripos has been only about eight a year, whilst in the natural science tripos it has been only five or six. The reason is, that the whole University system is so exclusively based upon competitive examinations, that the study of subjects unsuited for such examinations is a mere pretence, and cannot under the existing system be efficiently carried out. A less notorious but equally striking illustration of the same thing is to be found in the view which the undergraduates themselves take of the different papers in a college examination. The exami-

nations at Trinity College, for example, are composed partly of mathematical, partly of classical, *i.e.* philological, and partly of historical and literary questions relating to the authors whose works are the subjects of examination and to the times in which they lived. It might have been supposed that the students, at any rate, would attach more importance to the last class of papers, and would take more interest in them than in the other two; but this is so far from being the case, that they are, or were, always spoken of emphatically as "cram" papers, because it is precisely upon those subjects that the greatest amount of credit can be got by merely mechanical tact and study. It requires a considerable amount of really scientific knowledge to solve difficult mathematical problems, or to construe well a difficult passage from the classics; but it is the characteristic of the system of education by examinations to degrade the study of what ought to be the most interesting of all subjects—history, morals, and literature, as distinguished from philology—into a mere affair of analysis and *memoria technica*. The moral effects of this system are as bad as its intellectual effects. Not only does it tend to prevent the growth of any real love of knowledge, but it antedates the struggles of life, and robs the student of much of the freshness of what ought to be his happiest years. Any one whose recollections upon the subject are fresh will bear out our assertion, that a large class of persons go to the University solely with a view of getting a fellowship, which would enable them either to take orders or to enter one of the lay professions upon independent terms. To such a class the precise nature of the accomplishment for the acquisition of which they are to be rewarded is matter of comparative indifference. Human nature would be very different from what it is, if, with so many cheap places of education as now exist, this class were not a large and increasing one. The intense eagerness which pervades every portion of English society to rise in the world, to "succeed" in one shape or another, sends up yearly to Cambridge a whole set of students hungering and thirsting after degrees which will be both creditable and profitable to them, and which will raise them some steps in the social ladder. In one point of view, no doubt this is a very favourable symptom, and a subject for congratulation,—we should wish to see the wish for a good education as widely felt, and the means of gratifying that wish as widely diffused, as possible; but it is the desire of education itself which we wish to see increased, not the desire of the money and rank supposed to be its consequences, which is already abundantly powerful. Whatever measures may render the Universities more easy of access to the great body of the nation, we would cordially support; what-

ever would induce a larger number of persons to devote the time necessary for the purposes of University education to the instruction of their sons (a far more difficult task), we should approve of still more strongly; but we have no wish at all to see the Universities degraded into mere arenas, in which the performance of certain mental feats is rewarded by the payment of 1400*l.* or 1500*l.* and a considerable accession of social importance. Allow the University to be the scene of a constant selfish scramble for money-prizes, and its higher purposes will, after a time, be altogether forgotten; yet this is the direct and inevitable consequence of the present system of competitive examination. It would be hard to find a more forcible exposition of this evil than that which is incidentally given by the commissioners in speaking of the character of the mathematical examinations:

"It can hardly be denied, that an excess of book-work, called for in examinations, has a decided tendency to give industry an advantage over innate talent, or at least to place them more nearly on a level; and not merely industry (which, if well directed, and sanctioned by high motives, merits every recognition), but that perverse and obnoxious form of it, which, looking to the result of examinations only as a stepping-stone to worldly progress, is content thenceforward to throw overboard as an incumbrance, or to forget as utterly uninteresting, the acquirements of months or years of painful and grudgingly given toil.

This is, in fact, the great vice of the examination system, or rather a perversion of it from its legitimate use (that of ascertaining that sanctioned studies have been effectually pursued), to which the University, as an educating rather than a prize-bestowing body, ought to lend itself as little as possible. Where college-emolument is the direct object and avowed end of an examination, as in that for fellowships, scholarships, &c., the ready production of knowledge, however incoherent, will always offer a temptation difficult to resist; but in the University examinations* those who have not this stimulus, and who resort to the University for education and for education only, should be protected from its injurious influence, and taught to rely rather on a moderate amount of knowledge, soundly and honestly possessed, than on a larger amount, got up for the purpose of exhibition, with little comprehension of its real bearings and connections.

The evil of 'cramming' is so great, and its influence on the character, both intellectual and moral, so fatal, that we may be excused for dwelling on it somewhat at large. It originates, as already stated, in a misdirection of industry to the apparently honourable, and certainly advantageous, result of passing a good examination, rather

* It must be remembered, that in thirteen out of seventeen colleges fellowships are conferred exclusively in accordance with the degrees taken, and in two others—St. John's and Sydney—chiefly on that principle. It is only at King's, where all the scholars become fellows, and at Trinity, where the examinations are independent of the degrees, that this is not so.

than to the acquirement of sound knowledge for its own sake; and will never be eradicated, but continue to reappear in some form or other, while the results of examinations have the direct influence which they actually have on the prospects of those who undergo them. The causes of this influence are beyond the control of the University, and lie deep-seated in our social system, where they are daily acquiring new power."

We cannot agree with the commissioners in considering that the remedy for this state of things is to be found principally, or even to any very great extent, in improved regulations about examinations. It appears to us that a far more efficient remedy is to be found in the vigorous prosecution of the measures which they have themselves proposed for the reconstitution of the University as a body, distinct from and superior to the colleges, imparting instruction to the undergraduates upon its own principles, and by the agency of its own officers. In order to carry out such a plan, the Report proposed, amongst other things, the establishment of several new professorships, and of a class of public lecturers subordinate to the professors, to be engaged for the most part in catechetical teaching. It further recommended the establishment of one general and of several special boards of studies, to be charged with the general supervision of the subjects lectured upon, with a view to producing something like uniformity of plan and purpose amongst the various professors. Some of these boards have been, we believe, already established by the University itself; but we regret to observe that the bill contains no reference to the general board of studies, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the commissioners. The Report further proposes, that the course of study at present necessary for the B.A. degree should be considerably modified; and that, after passing through an examination in classics and mathematics analogous to the previous examination, or, as it is popularly called, the 'little-go,' the students should be allowed to pass four terms more in attendance on the lectures of some one or more of the professors and public lecturers, with a view to obtaining a place in some one of the existing or future triposes. Our own opinion is decidedly opposed to this change. We do not think that three years and a quarter is at all too long a period for steady continuous application to a given set of subjects, nor do we think it is by any means desirable that the Cambridge calendar should be further encumbered with abortive triposes. The existing state of things has many faults; but it is at least sufficiently definite. The alteration proposed by the commissioners appears to us to halt between two systems. It gives half to the colleges and half to the University; and inasmuch as it leaves untouched the whole system of mathematical

and classical honours, and of fellowships thereto appended, it seems to us that it would only add to the existing confusion, by increasing the number and diminishing the efficiency of the competitive examinations now in operation.

It would require a minute acquaintance with the various resources of the University, to which we make no claim, to draw out a scheme for the education of University students complete in all its parts. We agree with Mr. Blakesley in thinking that the various educating bodies—professors, colleges, and private tutors—might all, under a proper system, find enough to do; but we do not think this can be accomplished unless the existing system is so far modified as to give to the University its legitimate supremacy over the colleges. We should wish arrangements to be made which would revive the operation of the Elizabethan statutes, not, of course, in form, but in spirit. In our view, the lectures of the professors ought to be the mainspring of the whole. A certain number of courses of lectures might be selected by the University, attendance upon some of which should be compulsory upon all students, whilst the others might be optional. Merely for illustration, we would suppose that all students were obliged to attend either classical or mathematical lectures, and at least one of another list, comprising theology, law, physiology, history, political economy, &c. At present, attendance upon University lectures amounts, generally speaking, to hearing a man read aloud a chapter in a book. To prevent this, the recommendations of the commissioners might be carried out by the assignment of a staff of lecturers to every professor whose class might be sufficiently numerous to warrant it (to which posts the existing private tutors would naturally be appointed), amongst whom the professor would divide his class, to be personally and catechetically instructed in the various subjects lectured upon, from ten to twenty persons being allotted to each lecturer. The classes might be constructed according to the results of a great number of examinations, taking place perhaps three or four times in a term, and resembling those by which private tutors who have pupils enough to divide them into classes give them an opportunity of testing their proficiency. The frequency of such examinations, the small number of examinants, and the obscure and individual character of the result, would effectually confine them to their proper character of tests, and destroy their importance as great personal competitions. Once a year each professor might publish a list of his pupils, divided into alphabetical classes; and at the end of the University course these class-lists might be consolidated, without any such examinations as at present exist, into a University class-list, also alphabetically arranged. If some system

of this kind were established, it would make such demands on the time and thoughts of the pupils, that the college lectures and the instructions of the private tutors would of necessity conform to it, and would, of course, find their own level according to their value, just as they at present do with respect to the two examinations prescribed by the University. The fellowships might still be awarded as at present, either by reference to the University tests, or by competitive examinations, which are, in our opinion, as well adapted for the purpose of awarding prizes as they are unfit for purposes of education.

Such a change as this could, of course, be effected only by slow degrees; the steps by which it might be brought about are —the substitution of classes, arranged alphabetically, for the present arrangement in order of merit; the multiplication of pass-examinations; and increased activity on the part of the professors and the various boards of studies recommended by the commissioners, and partially instituted by the University.

The question, who is to teach? appears to us to a great extent to involve and to answer the question, what is to be taught? We think that if the principle that teaching is to be individual, catechetical, and undertaken for its own sake,—which it is never likely to be so long as closely *competing* bodies are the teachers—and not for the sake of exceptional honours awarded to successful pupils, were fully carried into practice, the discussions, which at present so much perplex the whole question of University reform with respect to the quality of the instruction to be afforded, would find their own solution.

It is certainly not for want of discussion that great difference of opinion exists upon the subject of the functions and objects of University instruction. Mr. Froude and Mr. Pattison in the Oxford, and Mr. Clark in the Cambridge Essays, have defended the existing practice of the University with an energy which is all the more remarkable when we remember the character of Mr. Froude's relations with Oxford, and the liberalism of Mr. Clark; and their side of the question has been maintained with an ability which fills us with admiration by Lord Lyndhurst in the House of Lords. But notwithstanding the practical acquaintance with the subject enjoyed by the writers in the Oxford and Cambridge Essays, and notwithstanding the extraordinary ability which characterises the speech of Lord Lyndhurst, we cannot think that the real point of the question has been sufficiently brought forward. Amongst other causes which have tended to obscure it, one is an "idol of the cave" which haunts the brains of a certain class of writers on this subject. Dr. Newman considers that a University (being derived from *universus*) ought to teach universal knowledge; that is, if we apprehend his argument rightly,

that the University ought to show the relations which all sciences bear to each other,—such as the relation between morals and metaphysics, between law and theology, between electricity and physiology, between physiology and metaphysics, and so on; so that the instruction given in any one branch of learning might have a certain relation to that which is afforded in any other: and something to the same effect, if we understand him rightly, is Mr. Pattison's doctrine, that it is the exclusive function of the University to teach the "*scientiâ scientiarum.*" In the first place, the word "university" has no such meaning as Dr. Newman applies to it. A *universitas* in Roman law means simply a corporation. The College of Surgeons, the Fishmongers' Company, Goldsmiths' Hall, are just as much *universitates* as Oxford and Cambridge. We suppose that even Dr. Newman would hardly contend that, as such, they ought to perform operations, or to affix the hall-mark to plate, in relation to the eternal fitness of things, and having regard to the connections between all the sciences. There are other objections besides this. What is the relation between any two given sciences? What, for example, is the relation between botany and theology? What is the connecting link between geology and international law? Where does political economy intersect with surgery? Or, coming to sciences between which some connection is universally recognised, have we quite settled the boundaries between theology and metaphysics, between metaphysics and morals, or between theology and geology or ethnology? We can understand that a man should maintain such a doctrine who has the face to assert that no Protestant body can teach astronomy correctly, because all astronomical investigation points to the conclusion that the earth moves round the sun, whereas in fact the sun moves round the earth, which we can only learn from theology; but to every mind which has not learnt under the influence of theological narcotics that

> "Right is wrong, and wrong is right,
> And white is black, and black is white,"

the doctrine that any body is bound to teach what no human being ever yet learnt, and what in all probability no finite intelligence is capable of understanding, is a great mystery. Oxford and Cambridge are quite incompetent to teach the *scientia scientiarum.* If a man wants his son to learn that, he had better send him to read with a Struldbrug, and matriculate him at the University of Laputa.

Lord Lyndhurst and Messrs. Froude and Clark come before us in a far less questionable shape. Lord Lyndhurst draws a delightful picture of the character of the education which the

University of Cambridge affords, as contrasted with that which is given by more showy but less solid institutions. In his lordship's view of the case, the Cambridge student is led through the whole cycle of the classics, and through the whole range of mathematics; and thereby has the advantage not only of the study of literature of the most elevating kind, but also of the strictest scientific discipline. Mr. Clark repeats the same statement at much greater length, and enters into a classification of the different species of education, which he describes as primary, commercial, liberal, and professional. Mr. Froude justifies the University system, as exemplified at Oxford and Cambridge, by drawing a distinction between Information and Education, and by insisting on the paramount importance of the latter; which, in his opinion, the Universities, and they only, continue to impart.

The answer to Lord Lyndhurst's theory is, that it is false in fact. No doubt such an education as he describes would be both efficient and liberal in the highest degree; but we never knew any one to whom it was really given. The University of Cambridge teaches nothing at all. It gives to certain persons certificates of the fact that they displayed more efficiently than certain other persons an acquaintance with some branches of knowledge; but it will give such a certificate for either classical or mathematical knowledge to the exclusion of the other, and hardly ever, as matter of fact, has occasion to give them for both.

The classifications of Messrs. Froude and Clark appear to us to be entirely fallacious. Indeed, they are so neat and portable, that it is quite impossible not to mistrust them. When a man tells you that the great error of life is to confound the provinces of the Reason and the Understanding, or of the Imagination and the Fancy, or of Information and Education—*fœnum habet in cornu*—we are involuntarily reminded of Messrs. Taper and Tadpole, and their famous cry of "Our young Queen and our old institutions." We are greatly sceptical as to the soundness of any distinction denoted by two substantives ending in *-ation* and beginning with capital letters.*

* If any thing were wanting to make us distrust Mr. Froude's theories, it would be supplied by his extraordinary inaccuracy as to matter of fact. In the *Oxford Essays*, pp. 50, 51, occurs the following passage: "At the London University, in the pass-examination for a bachelor's degree (and degrees are there taken at the age at which the course at Oxford only commences), there are required (*we believe we speak fairly within compass*) the Greek and Latin, the French and German languages, logic, moral philosophy, an indefinite quantity of mathematics, astronomy, anatomy, organic chemistry, and a general acquaintance with the results of all the other physical sciences, all Greek history, all Roman history, and, as if this were not enough, thrown in as a mere trifle to make the grouping complete, all English history. For the degree of M.A., taken two years later, all

"General knowledge," says Mr. Froude, "means general ignorance. Oxford" (and the same defence, *mutatis mutandis*, is often applied to Cambridge), "knowing well that if she attempted to educate by merely imparting information, the task was an endless and impossible one, has confined her teaching to specimens the most complete and illustrative which the world afforded her of the several subjects of general study. Thus she has not undertaken to teach languages, but language—language in the two most highly organised forms which it has assumed. So with philosophy, and so with history; in both cases she has confined herself to the treatment of the subject by a few great thinkers, selecting, with peculiar judgment, the writings of heathens, because in them the purely human character can best

ancient history is required, and all European history to the close of the eighteenth century." And, at p. 254, Mr. Pattison says, "The London University has been crushed under the pressure of the superior weight of metropolitan life." It is quite obvious that Mr. Froude (who speaks of the "Gower-Street Council") and Mr. Pattison both confound University College, London, with the University of London,—a blunder peculiarly inexcusable in Oxford men. It would take more room than we can spare to show the utter inaccuracy of every sentence written by Mr. Froude upon the subject. He obviously misconceives the whole character of the institution which he criticises, and transfers his Oxford notions upon the subject of degrees to a body which looks upon them quite in a different light from the old Universities, for reasons which are sufficiently obvious to every one who knows that the University of London is only a central examining board for no less than thirty-three different institutions, including, amongst others, Oxford and Cambridge. An ordinary degree at the old Universities is a mere *bene discessit*, at the University of London it is a prize; so that, with something like 1300 undergraduates, that body has but 542 B.As. and about 50 M.As. The examinations for these degrees are therefore necessarily more arduous than at the other Universities; but Mr. Froude vastly exaggerates their difficulty. Out of fifteen subjects of examination which he specifies, not one is correctly stated; and the "anatomy, organic chemistry, and general acquaintance with the results of all other physical sciences," exist only in his own imagination. What really is required is as follows: one Greek and one Latin book, chosen and announced two years before by the examiners from a printed list; considerably less mathematics than are necessary for the lowest honours at Cambridge, the amount required being most carefully specified at pp. 43, 44 of the *University Calendar* (this is Mr. Froude's "indefinite quantity"); certain parts of animal physiology—also carefully specified; the introduction and the first and second books of Whateley's *Logic;* three books of Paley's *Morals*, and Butler's *Three Sermons on Human Nature;* either French *or* (not *and*) German enough for translation and re-translation; the history of Greece to the death of Alexander; of Rome, to that of Augustus; of England, to the year 1700. The statement about the examination for the M.A. degree is correct as far as it goes, but is defective from the writer's obvious ignorance of its character, shown (amongst other things) by the unmeaning remark, "taken two years later." The M.A. degree at the University of London is a high honour, and is hardly ever taken at all. The two years is the minimum. There is another misstatement in the same place, about the law examination at the inns-of-court: Mr. Froude repeats the statements of a foolish letter to the *Times*, in which the writer had mistaken a list of the books from which the reader (Mr. Phillimore) intended to lecture for a list of the books which he, the pupil, was expected to get up. The exact information as to the London degrees was attainable in any recent *London University Calendar*, and as to the law examination at the inns-of-court: had it been less accessible and more recondite, Mr. Froude would certainly have been more correct.

be studied free from any foreign element or influence. She has not entertained the ambitious expectation that in three years she can teach her pupils to understand the entire fortunes of mankind. She has thought it sufficient if she can bring them to understand something of man by studying his actions in close and minute detail."* And to somewhat the same effect Mr. Clark observes: "It cannot be too often repeated, that the object of a general or liberal education is not to impart the greatest possible amount of what is strangely called 'information,' but rather, in the true sense of that much-abused word, to *inform* the mind, to fit it for the acquisition and retention of all sound learning, and for the perception of beauty and truth. To effect this, we must employ such processes as shall train the three great faculties—reason, memory, imagination—to a natural and harmonious development. That mind is maimed and crippled wherein one of these members has been exercised, to the neglect and enfeeblement of the other two..... Reasoning is divided into two main divisions, exact or demonstrative, and moral or probable. The study of mathematics exercises almost exclusively the former, the study of classics chiefly the latter process; and there is no conceivable subdivision of either process which is not brought into play by the one study or the other."

We take these two passages to constitute the answers of one school of admirers of the existing University system to the attacks which have been made upon it by some of the reformers. With far greater sympathy for the Universities than for many of their assailants, we cannot but regret the line taken up by their defenders. We shall not stop to consider minutely how far Mr. Froude's ingenious argument is an afterthought. There is something grotesque enough in the notion of the original authors of the Oxford curriculum selecting the writings of heathens, "because in them the purely human character could best be studied." We should like to know what Dean Jackson would have said of such a sentence. The phrase "purely human" would have sounded very strange at Christchurch some thirty-five years ago. It would not, we imagine, be hard to show that the selection of studies at Oxford was guided to a very great extent by accident, and to a still greater extent by the nature of the accomplishments possessed by the governing body, who naturally preferred to teach what they knew or could easily learn themselves. We take wider ground than this, and assert that the distinction between information and education is a mere distinction of words and not of things; and that the classification of education, as being primary, commercial, liberal, and professional, is really no classification at all.

* Oxford Essays, p. 53.

No human being ever advocated the doctrine, that information, in the sense of mere acquaintance with a number of facts, is in itself desirable. Even Mr. Froude's *bête noir*, the "Gower-Street Council," would not give much to know that Mr. A. lives at 100 Gower Street, and Mrs. B. at 101. The greatest enthusiast for "general knowledge" has some principle of selection. He proposes to teach what he considers desirable to be known, and not to teach what he does not. On the other hand, we never yet heard of any education which did not consist of information. The old Persians, who taught their children to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth, gave them at least three very useful pieces of information; when a child is taught to suck, which is perhaps the earliest of all educational processes, it is taught the practical application of hydrostatics. Indeed, education without information is like substance without qualities, or speech without words. The question, therefore, between Messrs. Froude and Clark on the one hand, and their despised opponents on the other, is only a question as to the comparative *usefulness* (a word which the gentlemen in question generally print in inverted commas) of certain kinds of information, and not a question between two processes of different kinds. Mr. Clark's classification of education seems to us to be open to precisely the same criticism. Professional, liberal, and commercial education, all imply primary education; and a professional education is to a great extent a liberal one. Indeed, neither classification seems to us to advance the question one step. It still remains precisely where it was, and is shortly this: What is the most useful kind of information which can be imparted to a young man between eighteen and twenty-two, independently of his future plans in life; and what is the most effective way of imparting it? Nor can we see that these gentlemen contribute in any degree to the solution of the question by contrasting the shallow character of that "general knowledge which is general ignorance" with the thoroughness with which the Universities teach classics and mathematics. Is there any necessary connection between what is modern and what is superficial? Is there in the nature of things some alternative between teaching philology and mathematics thoroughly, and a little universal knowledge superficially? Why might not the University, if it thought it on the whole best to do so, teach nothing but Fearne's *Contingent Remainders*, and allow nobody to leave Cambridge without an absolutely perfect acquaintance with all the learning involved in a full appreciation of the great mystery of Perrin *v.* Blake? Why might not *Cain*, or the *Life of Tom Jones*, or the *Arundines Cami*, be made the subjects of study as profound and as minute as Thucydides or Plato? We can suggest many

reasons why they should not, but none why they could not. The wisdom of learning well what you learn at all, and of not attempting to teach your pupil more than he can take in, is unquestionable; but it is recognised, though Mr. Froude may not think so, at other places than Oxford, and by other banks than those of the Isis and the Cam. These gentlemen may be right in supposing that classics, mathematics, and what Oxford men call "science," are more useful than any other parts of learning, but that is not because they are the only subjects capable of being studied profoundly, but because of some inherent convenience or excellence.

Whilst, for these reasons, we cannot fully sympathise with the University conservatives, we are equally unable to go along with the popular cry for reform. We feel strongly that the Universities are and must be places of education for the comparatively rich,—for those who have sufficient means to enable them to spend the first twenty-four years of their lives in pursuits which will not afford them any definite prospect of immediately earning a livelihood at the end of that time. To turn the Universities into finishing schools for the middle and lower classes, would be to destroy their usefulness altogether. No doubt provision might be made, by certain applications of part of the University funds, for extending their advantages to a small number of able youths of the poorer classes; but these must of necessity be the exceptions. If a man is to pass at once from the University to a shop or a counting-house, he had better not come there at all. The expense of a University education is not a question of money. It is a question of time. If it is to retain any portion of its distinctive character, it must take place at a time of life when the mind has attained a certain maturity and power of apprehending great subjects, and must not be cramped by the necessity of being turned to immediate money profit. At all events, if we vulgarise the Universities by shortening the time of study, by teaching such common accomplishments as go to raise the salary of a clerk, or to increase the value of a commercial traveller, we shall have to establish some other places of education for the training of statesmen, of clergymen, of lawyers, of physicians, and of gentlemen. The usefulness of the teaching of a University depends upon the degree in which it qualifies men to take high stations in life, and to serve their country in those functions in which a certain grasp of intellect and clear perception of large principles is more necessary than any amount of mere commonplace cleverness. To compare the rough-and-ready tact of a common man of business with the real power and intellect of a highly educated person of equal original powers, is the commonest, the vulgarest, and the

silliest of all mistakes. It is like comparing a gossiping country apothecary in good business to a first-rate London physician, or a keen-witted attorney to one of the fifteen judges. We will assume, therefore, that in considering the usefulness of different branches of study we are to take into account a somewhat remote future, and an enlarged sphere of action. Upon this view of the subject, we think there is much truth in what Messrs. Froude and Clark urge with respect to the advantages of classical study. We do not quite see our way to agreeing with Mr. Froude's admiration for it on account of its "heathenism." Surely there is a modern literature which is not altogether ecclesiastical. A man might read Blackstone's *Commentaries*, or even Hallam's *Constitutional History*, without knocking his head against many "theological prejudices." It is not every man who looks at the universe through ecclesiastical spectacles, and who finds in all the events of life contrasts between the human and the superhuman, the ascetic and the Benthamic, and hints upon the subjects on which Milton's devils had so much conversation. Still, no one can deny that we get a greater amount of literary excellence in a smaller range in the classics than is to be found elsewhere, and we will go so far as to concede to Mr. Clark the truth of his apology for philology—that "it would take many pages to write out at length the inductive syllogisms which have to be proposed and solved in determining the true meaning of a difficult sentence in Thucydides or Tacitus." Our concession will be made all the more readily, inasmuch as the same would be true of speaking or taking a walk, of throwing a stone at a mark, or of any other of those processes which admit of a logical description, but which are performed by the agency of a kind of habit which becomes almost instinctive. We will also admit the full value of mathematics as a mental discipline; and we should wish not only to admit, but to call closer attention than is usually bestowed upon it, to the fact, that these subjects are unquestionably far more convenient for the teachers than any others; that by their selection it is easy to ascertain that the pupil has really mastered his instructions; to choose the particular branches to which he is to address himself, and to compare his progress with that of others. But it is not so clear that what is pleasantest for the tutor is best for the pupil, or that it is wiser to learn, because it is easier to teach, Greek and Latin, than English history. The conclusive objection to the existing Cambridge course of study is, that the students will not learn it, and the University cannot make them. That a man, fully instructed in the whole range of classics and mathematics, has received an admirable education, may be perfectly true; but it is quite consistent with this that twenty other

persons have received almost no education at all in order to fit him out. It may be better to learn mathematics than to learn law; but it is certainly better to learn law than to learn nothing. The interests of the students who would have adopted studies of various kinds are sacrificed to those of the few who take an interest in what are considered the highest kinds of studies. It may be answered, that the failure of the natural and moral science triposes is conclusive against this view;—it does, in fact, confirm it. The University adopts a mode of teaching—competitive examination—totally unfit for any subjects except classics and mathematics; and then turns round on the students and says, "You take no interest in the studies which I do not enable you to learn."

The advantages claimed for the present studies of the University consist partly of their intrinsic value, and partly of the mental habits necessary for their cultivation; partly, that is, of the matter taught, and partly of the manner in which it is taught. In respect of the intrinsic value of the studies pursued many arguments are urged, with which our readers are undoubtedly sufficiently familiar. No one capable of forming an opinion upon the subject doubts that classical literature is, as far as style goes, the best of all literatures, and that it contains much valuable matter in a small compass. Of the intrinsic value of mathematics greater doubts may be entertained. Except in certain special studies, they are of little use; indeed the knowledge and the application of the higher branches of analysis are almost exclusively confined to professional mathematicians. In such pursuits as civil engineering, navigation, and the like, certain results, condensed into short practical forms, are used, in total ignorance of the principles upon which they are based. It must be observed moreover, that however intrinsically valuable a profound acquaintance with classics or mathematics may be, a superficial acquaintance with them is almost entirely useless; and that they are sure, in most instances, to be less thoroughly learnt, and more thoroughly forgotten, than almost any other subjects. If, after infinite labour, a man has learnt at twenty-two to construe some of the easier parts of Xenophon and Virgil with some sort of approach to accuracy, the value of his knowledge is considerably diminished by the reflection that he is sure to have forgotten it by twenty-three. If he has obtained an equally unsatisfactory knowledge of some of the commoner rules of political economy, there is, at any rate, a chance that later in life he will find them less useless than he would find the other accomplishment. A forged cheque, which you cannot present for payment, is less valuable than a bad sovereign, which you may pass innocently.

Of the value of the two branches of study as a mental training, we shall only say, that we fully agree in the common opinion upon the subject. We think that either of them, taught as they are to the better class of students at Cambridge, has a great tendency to give habits of accurate, patient, continuous thought, and to impress upon the mind the necessity of understanding the principles upon which rules are founded, as well as the empirical application of the rules themselves. Thus far we fully agree with the University conservatives. We differ from them in thinking that, for many reasons, a great proportion of people are quite incapable of studying classics or mathematics in such a manner as to derive from their studies any mental training at all. We further think that the advantages in point of mental training derived from the existing studies depend almost entirely upon the manner in which they are conducted; and that if other studies were pursued in the same manner, they would produce the same results. The question as to the comparative intrinsic value of different studies admits of little more than assertion and counter-assertion. The other part of the problem seems to us to require more illustration and discussion than it has hitherto received. We will not undertake to say how many of the subjects which are at present comprised in the examinations for the natural and moral science triposes are fitted for the purposes of University education. We should feel very considerable doubt about some of them; but we are quite sure that others admit of study as close, as accurate, and as consecutive as either classics or mathematics, and that they would afford to some at least of the students a far more useful mental training. As at present constituted, the new triposes, as they are called, are a mere mockery. They are open to bachelors of arts only, and are therefore altogether excluded from the ordinary curriculum; and they are moreover entirely dependent on a single competitive examination, so absurdly constituted, that a student has to be examined in some five or six different subjects, any one of which would furnish him with ample work during the whole of his University course. Such an institution is of course ineffectual.

Let us suppose that, by some such revival of the powers of the professors as we have indicated, it were made a reality. We are not prepared to say what professors would be included in the list; but it would certainly include theology, law, modern history, political economy, and some other subjects. For the sake of a single special illustration of our meaning, let us suppose a student to choose the professor of English law. What sort of education would he get? We will suppose the text-book adopted to be the common legal handbook—Stephen's *Commentaries*. The curriculum might perhaps be somewhat

as follows: In the first year the professor would probably endeavour to give a general view of the subject. He would begin with some discussion of Blackstone's definition of law in general, and municipal law in particular. He would go on to personal rights, and particularly to proprietary rights. He would then explain what is meant by real, and what by personal property. Taking real property first, he would point out the distinction between corporeal and incorporeal hereditaments, and explain the fundamental maxim of English law, that all land is held of some superior lord. He would then shortly explain the general rules as to the quality of estates—freehold and copyhold, and as to their quantity—estates in fee-simple, fee-tail, for life, or for terms of years. He would say something of the difference between legal estates and trust estates, and something also of prescription and inheritance. He would then go on to personal property, and point out the different modes in which it is acquired—as by invention, contract, bankruptcy, and the statutes of distribution. He would next explain the rights arising out of the private relations of master and servant, husband and wife, parent and child, and guardian and ward. Some of the principal points of the law of public rights, of wrongs and their remedies, and of crimes and their punishments, would complete the course. Much most accurate and definite knowledge on all these subjects might be imparted in the first year. Such of the students as fully understood what they then learnt might be taken over the same ground more minutely in their second, and more carefully still in their third year; and the others might, with great profit to themselves, be forced to attend the same lectures a second, and, if necessary, a third time. The function of the lecturers (if the number of students were such as to make them necessary) it is not easy to illustrate without going a good deal into detail. But suppose that the professor had lectured upon the subject of personal incapacity to commit crime, by reason of infancy, coverture, or insanity; and suppose he had referred, amongst other things, to the doctrine that insanity only entitles a man to acquittal when it incapacitates him from distinguishing right from wrong. The lecturer might put to his class various questions tending to test their grasp of the principle. He might ask them how, upon the principle in question, you can punish a man who does not, when sane, believe in the difference between right and wrong? How far an insane and violent impulse to commit a crime is a defence? What would be the effect of proving that the prisoner laboured under a delusion if the evidence stopped there? And he might set them as an exercise to read and report upon the cases of Lord Ferrers, of Onslow, of Sir A. Kinloch, and of M'Naghten. Three years' lectures upon such a

plan as we have suggested would certainly not be a very desultory or superficial study; and we think that no one who has ever made the experiment, will doubt that such of the students as thoroughly understood even that small part of the learning of uses and trusts, or of contingent remainders, or of special pleading, which is contained in the *Commentaries*, would have gone through a pretty severe mental training. To write down with perfect accuracy the outline which Mr. Sergeant Stephen gives of the proceedings in bankruptcy, would require as clear a head and as strong a memory as the reproduction of almost any mathematical "bookwork;" whilst it would require not much less ingenuity and logic to solve some of the problems, of which the reports are full, than to trace a curve or calculate a chance. No doubt definitions are not used in law with the same precision as in mathematics; but we do not think that the meaning of words and the precise value of facts are ever scanned by any human being with such ingenuity and such sagacity as by a special pleader. As to the intrinsic value of law and mathematics, when acquired, opinions of course will differ: we cannot help thinking that something might be said on the legal side of the question, and that minds would occasionally be found which would take an interest in that study, and which no earthly power could induce to learn mathematics. One such course of lectures as we have recommended would, if united with a certain amount of classics or mathematics, be quite enough fully to occupy an undergraduate's career; and we think we have said enough to show that it might be made a study infinitely more severe, searching, and continuous, than any thing which the University now teaches. We can see no reason why a man should not pass three years most profitably in studying Stephen's *Commentaries*, J. Mill's or Ricardo's *Political Economy*, Butler's *Analogy*, or Carpenter's *Physiology*. It is, to our minds, utterly unintelligible why there should always be assumed to be an inexorable dilemma between teaching a person classics and mathematics thoroughly and teaching him every thing else superficially. That the existing system of the University of Cambridge is so contrived as to create such a difficulty we quite understand; but if a man lays out his day in such a manner, that if he does not employ all the morning in arranging his toilette, he has to fritter it away in gossip, we should feel more inclined to advise him to lay it out more wisely than to join with him in lamenting that the constitution of life is such that he must either be careful about trifles or careless about matters of importance.

So far we have pretty freely criticised the principles and the practice of our* *alma mater;* but it must never be forgotten, that

* We beg to be permitted the use of the personal pronoun in a personal sense.

there is another and a far pleasanter side to the subject. That the education which the students give to themselves and to each other is far more important for good or for evil than any thing which they derive from lectures or examinations, is a fact universally recognised by those who have themselves experienced its character. A youth of nineteen, just emancipated from school-restraints, and master for the first time of his actions, must be very unimaginative and very passionless if the world does not wear a strange appearance in his eyes, if his curiosity is not awakened by numberless questions on all sorts of subjects, if, in the free collision with his equals and superiors, he does not find his previous prejudices, feelings, and estimate of himself, of others, and of all the relations of life, undergoing all sorts of changes, and assuming all kinds of new and strange forms. He must be very fortunate if, in the outburst of passion, he does not find his way into situations in which he will learn sterner lessons than any which the schools have to teach him. He must be very unobservant, if he does not find in the careers of his associates commentaries of the most curious kind on life in a great variety of shapes. Add to this, that if such a youth has talent enough to come within the range of the express instructions of the University, he is sure to read, or at any rate to skim, novels, poems, memoirs, histories, political pamphlets, the latest theology, the fashionable metaphysics, voyages and travels, reviews, newspapers, and sermons, with an omnivorous appetite which will hardly come to him again. All this may be very desultory, very disconnected, very unsatisfactory in a thousand ways; but it will nevertheless happen. Perhaps a not unwise criticism might say to such a person, in the words of one who is pretty sure to be one of his favourite poets,

> "Thy dream was good;
> While thou abodest in the bud,
> It was the stirring of the blood.
>
> If nature put not forth her power
> About the opening of the flower,
> Who is there that would live an hour?"

It is through this kind of fermentation, acting on many minds and assuming many forms, that the most important part of University education is performed. The difference between a man who has and one who has not enjoyed that advantage, lies much more in the influences under which he has passed through the stage which connects boyhood and manhood than in the possession or non-possession of particular accomplishments, accompa-

its double use is one of the great inconveniences of periodical literature. Some time since, the *Times*, in reviewing Mr. James Montgomery's poems, said, "We first met Mr. Montgomery in a Brixton omnibus." One is inclined to wonder that Mr. Montgomery and the other passengers escaped the fate of Semele.

nied by the habits of mind which their acquisition in a particular manner engenders. What, then, is the duty of the University? It is, we think, rather that of an *alma nutrix* than of an *alma mater*. At best it can but assist nature. The most important part of the education which it professes to give is out of its reach, and is regulated by influences over which it has but an indirect control. We do not, however, agree with Mr. Carlyle's suggestion, that the best University would be an hotel, with a certain number of police regulations, a good library, and a competent quantity of stationery. There is, as we have been all taught by a familiar and venerable authority, a certain great capitalist who is always ready to relieve the labour-market by an unlimited demand for idle hands. The peculiar office of a University, in our opinion, is to supply to the students precisely that kind of employment which a profession supplies to grown-up men. The University course of study ought to be a permanent solid occupation, the diligent prosecution of which should be attended by the ordinary rewards, and its neglect by the ordinary penalties of diligence or negligence in a profession—that is to say, the obtaining or not obtaining of the rewards which the University has to give. The comparison may appear fanciful, but it may be carried further; for as a man is not to be envied who makes himself a slave to his profession, so the University, which has it in its power to regulate the conditions under which the profession of study shall be carried on, ought to make such arrangements as should suggest to the minds, or rather to the instincts, of the undergraduates the truth that their studies are to be followed with a certain liberality of spirit, and with a full acknowledgment of the value of many influences collateral to them. It is an unwise thing to condemn a high-spirited young man to pass the three freshest years of his life in a continual bondage to examinations, so that, as soon as one ordeal is passed, he is to begin to prepare himself for another. He ought to have much leisure. If he is industrious, he will have no sort of difficulty in occupying it; and being thrown on his own resources whilst it lasts, it will probably be the most useful part of his University course. If he is idle, no amount of college regulations will diminish his idleness; and, after all, the University must assume a certain amount of industry on the part of its pupils in all its arrangements. It is on this principle that we strongly agree with Mr. Blakesley in advocating the maintenance of the present long vacation as a most valuable part of the University year. We must remember, that the students are growing, are forming their plans and opinions of life, and that they must have frequent opportunities of doing so unfettered by University restrictions. They have arrived at an age at which the natural sanctions c

industry begin to operate, and at which artificial stimulants ought as much as possible to be dispensed with. In medical and legal education there are some prizes to be won, and some emoluments; but there are, and obviously ought to be, no such things as class-lists. The reason is, that the connection between future success in life and present industry are so obvious, that any other inducements would operate only as disturbing forces, diverting the mind from the endeavour to obtain knowledge to the endeavour to obtain from others a certificate of something which is taken as conclusive evidence of knowledge. In the profession followed at the Universities the connection is not so obvious, and it therefore becomes necessary to increase the artificial inducements to exertion; but every arrangement and every practice of the University ought to be made to testify to the fact, that a University education is meant to benefit the student and not to satisfy examiners, and that its object is the instruction gained and not the honours which attest its attainment.

We have pointed out what appear to us to be the defects of the University in this respect, and have attempted to suggest a remedy, consisting principally in a return to the ancient system, adapted to the present state of knowledge; but we cannot conclude without paying the very highest tribute that any words of ours can pay to the indirect influences of Cambridge life on those who are so happy as to share them. On such a subject we cannot feel, and do not care to affect, impartiality. We believe the English Universities, and especially Cambridge, to be the very noblest places of education that ever deserved the gratitude of mankind. We do not wish so much to point to the grandest list of great names that adorns the annals of any society, as to that common type of character which we all know and love so well. Where can we find such a seminary for all the simple manly virtues which have made England what it is? Can the youth of any other country vie with the youth of England in that quiet strength, that noble modesty, that frank courage, without which wisdom is cunning and knowledge vanity? Many lessons are taught at Cambridge which are not to be learnt from books. In the midst of all the heat of a system founded on competition, we never remember an unworthy word or an ungenerous feeling. The innate nobility of the subjects of the experiment prevents at least one of its most obvious bad consequences. Whatever we may think of competitive examinations, we cannot charge them with producing envy or ill-will. On the contrary, they are fair manly vigorous contests, conducted in perfect honour and with the noblest spirit. Who has not seen men, excluded by the success of others from the objects of their fondest ambition, perhaps from a prospect of early independence, congratulate their successful

rivals, with a total unconsciousness that they are doing any thing more than a thing of course? How many tales the University could tell of hopeful buoyant energy winning its way to a career of honour and usefulness against every impediment of fortune. How nobly does it nurse that utterly fearless social democracy in which are engendered the rough courtesy and gallant stoicism of demeanour which are the most essential elements in our conception of an English gentleman. What a noble society is that, of which the very idleness is more energetic than the studies of other nations, and in which the diligence of mere youths equals and often surpasses that of grown men. Whatever faults our Universities have, we assert that their indirect influences are incomparably good. Cambridge may in some respects be an *arida nutrix*, but she is at any rate a *nutrix leonum*. Whatever else men do or do not know on leaving Cambridge, they know their places. They know how to respect and obey their elders and betters; and therefore, respecting and commanding themselves, they go forth as the very flower of the race which has girdled the world with its empire, which rules those who submit, and strikes down those who resist, with more than Roman force and Roman justice.* Cambridge is at once a source and a representative of that imperial character which is not so much our most precious possession as the very soul of the nation itself. The eye would be taken from the body, the spring from the year, if those grand sources which nourished Bacon and Milton and Newton were dried-up or polluted. A noble blood circulates in the veins of our Universities; for they nourish, and in no small degree create, the wisdom of the wisest, the courage of the bravest, and the strength of the strongest of the nations. Peace be within their walls, and plenteousness within their palaces; for our brethren and companions' sake we have wished them prosperity.

Thinking thus of these great bodies, and especially of Cambridge, we would advocate no reforms which did not tend to stimulate to even greater efforts a spirit which perhaps needs but little stimulus. We would never degrade so noble an education as the Universities at present afford; we would only extend its direct influences beyond their present sphere. We would not bate one jot of the high demands which Cambridge makes on the intellect and on the heart. Let the teaching be as severe, as concentrated, as laborious as it is now; but let it be extended to all, and let it interest all. In these days, in which so many voices complain of the narrowness and inefficiency, sometimes even of the stupidity, of the only [illegible] the world which has

* "Ce peuple romain, dont l'Ang[illegible] la grandeur, la dureté, la liberté traditionnelle, la p[illegible] énergie." Montalembert, *l'Avenir politique*

the magnanimity to tolerate such language, we rejoice to be able to call upon one of our most venerable institutions to extend its power and to widen its influence, not in the language of despondency or of reproach, but in the words of one of the greatest—though even he was not the greatest—of Cambridge men: "Consider," we would say to the Universities, as he said to the Lords and Commons of England,—"consider what a nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the teachers,—a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. . . . . Now once again, by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church, even to the reforming of reformation itself: what does he, then, but reveal himself to his servants, and, as his manner is, first to his Englishmen? I say, as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast city; a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not more anvils and hammers, waking to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation. Others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more than a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil but wise and faithful labourers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies?"

Art. IV.—MR. MACAULAY.

The History of England, from the Accession of James the Second. By Thomas Babington Macaulay. Longman.

This is a marvellous book. Every body has read it, and every one has read it with pleasure. It has little advantage of subject. When the volumes came out, an honest man said, "I suppose something happened between the years 1689 and 1697; but what happened I do not know." Every one knows now. No period with so little obvious interest will henceforth be so familiarly known. Only a most felicitous and rather curious genius could shed such a light on such an age. If in the following pages we seem to cavil and find fault, let it be remembered, that the business of a critic is criticism; that it is *not* his business to be thankful; that he must attempt an estimate rather than a eulogy.

Mr. Macaulay seems to have in a high degree the temperament most likely to be that of a historian. This may be summarily defined as the temperament which inclines men to take an interest in actions as contrasted with objects, and in past actions in preference to present actions. We should expand our meaning. Some people are unfortunately born scientific. This means that they take an interest in the objects of nature. They feel a curiosity about shells, snails, horses, butterflies. They are delighted at an ichthyosaurus, and excited at a polyp; they are learned in minerals, vegetables, animals; they have skill in fishes, and attain renown in pebbles: in the highest cases they know the great causes of grand phenomena, can indicate the courses of the stars or the current of the waves; but in every case it remains their characteristic, that their minds are directed not to the actions of man, but to the scenery amidst which he lives; not to the inhabitants of this world, but to the world itself; not to what most resembles themselves, but to that which is most unlike themselves. What causes men to take an interest in that in which they do take an interest is commonly a difficult question—for the most part, indeed, it is an insoluble one; but in this case it would seem to have a negative cause—to result from the absence of an intense and vivid nature. The inclination of mind which abstracts the attention from that in which it can feel sympathy to that in which it cannot, seems to arise from a want of sympathy. A tendency to devote the mind to trees and stones as much as, or in preference to, men and women, seems

to imply that the intellectual qualities, the abstract reason, and the inductive scrutiny which can be applied equally to trees and to men, to stones and to women, predominate over the more special qualities solely applicable to our own race,—the keen love, the eager admiration, the lasting hatred, the lust of rule which fasten men's interests on people and to people. It is a confirmation of this, that, even in the greatest cases, scientific men have been calm men. Their actions are unexceptionable; scarcely a spot stains their excellence; if a doubt is to be thrown on their moral character, it would be rather that they were insensible to the temptations than that they were involved in the offences of ordinary men. A certain aloofness and abstractedness cleave to their greatness. There is a coldness in their fame. We think of Euclid as of fine ice; we admire Newton as we admire the peak of Teneriffe. Even in the grandest cases, the intensest labours, the most remote triumphs of the abstract intellect, seem to carry us into a region different from our own—to be in a *terra incognita* of pure reasoning, to cast a chill on human glory.

It is certain that the taste of most persons is quite opposite. The tendency of man is to take an interest in man, and almost in man only. The world has a vested interest in itself. Analyse the minds of a crowd of men, and what will you find? Something of the outer earth, no doubt,—odd geography, odd astronomy, doubts whether Scutari is in the Crimea, investigations whether the moon is less or greater than Jupiter; some idea of herbs, more of horses; ideas too more or less vague of the remote and supernatural,—notions which the tongue cannot speak, which it would seem the world would hardly bear if thoroughly spoken. Yet, setting aside these which fill the remote corners of the lesser outworks of the brain, the whole stress and vigour of the ordinary faculties is expended in their possessor and his associates, on the man and on his fellows. In almost all men, indeed, this is not simply an intellectual contemplation; they not only look on, but act. The impulse to busy themselves with the affairs of men goes further than the simple attempt to know and comprehend them: it warms them with a further life; it incites them to stir and influence those affairs; its animated energy will not rest till it has hurried them into toil and conflict. At this stage it is that the mind of the historian, as we abstractedly conceive it, naturally breaks off: it has more interest in human affairs than the naturalist; it instinctively selects the actions of man for occupation and scrutiny, in preference to the habits of fishes or the structure of stones; but it has not so much vivid interest in them as the warm and acting man. It is sufficient to it to know; it can bear not to take a part. A certain want of impulse seems

born with the disposition. To be constantly occupied about the actions of others; to have constantly presented to your contemplation and attention events and occurrences memorable only as evincing certain qualities of mind and will, which very qualities in a measure you feel within yourself, and yet without any impulse to exhibit them in the real world of action "which is the world of all of us;" to contemplate, yet never act; "to have the House before you," and yet to be content with the reporters' gallery,—shows a chill impassiveness of temperament, a certain sluggish insensibility to ardent impulse, a heavy immobility under ordinary emotion. The image of the stout Gibbon placidly contemplating the animated conflicts, the stirring pleadings of Fox and Burke, watching a revolution and heavily taking no part in it, gives an idea of the historian as he is likely to be. Why, it is often asked, "is history dull? It is a narrative of life, and life is of all things the most interesting." The answer is, that it is written by men too dull to take the common interest in life, in whom languor predominates over zeal, and sluggishness over passion.

Macaulay is not dull, and it may seem hard to attempt to bring him within the scope of a theory which is so successful in explaining dullness. Yet, in a modified and peculiar form, we can perhaps find in his remarkable character unusually distinct traces of the insensibility which have been ascribed to the historian. The means are ample: Mr. Macaulay has not spent his life in a corner; if posterity should refuse—of course they will not refuse—to read a line of his writings, they would yet be sought out by studious inquirers, as those of a man of high political position, great notoriety, and greater oratorical power. We are not therefore obliged, as in so many cases even among contemporaries, to search for the author's character in his books alone; we are able from other sources to find out his character, and then apply it to the explanation of the peculiarities of his works. Mr. Macaulay has exhibited many high attainments, many dazzling talents, much singular and well-trained power; but the quality which would most strike the observers of the interior man is what may be called his *in*experiencing nature. Men of genius have in general been distinguished by their extreme susceptibility to external experience. Finer and softer than other men, every exertion of their will, every incident of their lives, influences them more deeply than it would others. Their essence is at the same time finer and more impressible; it receives a distincter mark, and receives it more easily than the souls of the herd. From his peculiar sensibility, the man of genius bears the stamp of life commonly more clearly than his fellows; even casual associations make a deep impression on him: examine his mind, and you may

discern his fortunes. Mr. Macaulay has nothing of this. You could not tell what he has been. His mind shows no trace of change. What he is, he was; and what he was, he is. He early attained a high development, but he has not increased it since; years have come, but they have whispered little; as was said of the second Pitt, "He never grew, he was cast." The volume of "speeches" which he has published place the proof of this in every man's hand. His first speeches are as good as his last; his last scarcely richer than his first. He came into public life at an exciting season; he shared at the time in that excitement, and that excitement still seems to quiver in his mind. He delivered marvellous rhetorical exercises on the Reform Bill at the time; he speaks of it with marvellous rhetorical power even now. He is still the man of '32. From that era he looks on the past. He sees "Old Sarum" in the seventeenth century, and Gatton in the civil wars. You may fancy an undertone in his mind running somewhat thus: The Norman barons commenced the series of reforms which "*we* consummated;" Hampden was "preparing for the occasion in which I had a part;" William "for the debate in which I took occasion to observe." With a view to that era every thing begins; up to that moment every thing ascends. That was the "fifth act" of the human race; the remainder of history is only an afterpiece. All this was very natural at the moment; nothing could be more probable than that a young man of the greatest talents, entering at once into important life at a conspicuous opportunity, should exaggerate its importance; he would fancy it was the "crowning achievement," the greatest "in the tide of time." But what is remarkable is, that he should retain the idea now; that years have brought no influence, experience no change. The events of twenty years have been full of rich instruction on the events of twenty years ago; but they have not instructed him. His creed is a fixture. It is the same on his peculiar topic—on India. Before he went there he made a speech on the subject; Lord Canterbury, who must have heard a million speeches, said it was the best he had ever heard. It is difficult to fancy that so much vivid knowledge could be gained from books—from horrible Indian treatises; that such imaginative mastery should be possible without actual experience. Not forgetting, or excepting, the orations of Burke, it was perhaps as remarkable a speech as was ever made on India by an Englishman who had not been in India. Now he has been there he speaks no better—rather worse; he spoke excellently without experience, he speaks no better with it,—if any thing, it rather puts him out. His speech on the Indian charter a year or two ago was not finer than that on the charter of 1833. Before he went to India he recommended that writers should be examined

in the classics; after being in India he recommended that they should be examined in the same way. He did not say he had seen the place in the mean time, he did not think that had any thing to do with it. You could never tell from any difference in his style what he had seen, or what he had not seen. He is so insensible to passing objects, that they leave no distinctive mark, no intimate peculiar trace.

It is characteristic of such a man that he should think literature more instructive than life. Hazlitt said severely of Mackintosh, "He might like to read an *account* of India; but India itself, with its burning, shining face, was a mere blank, an endless waste to him. Persons of this class have no more to say to a plain matter of fact staring them in the face than they have to a hippopotamus." This was a keen criticism on Sir James, savouring of the splenetic mind from which it came. As a complete estimate, it would be a most unjust one of Macaulay; but it cannot be denied, that there are a whole class of minds which prefer the literary delineation of objects to the actual eyesight of them. An insensible nature, like a rough hide, resists the breath of passing things; an unobserving retina will depict in vain whatever a quicker eye shall not explain. But any one can understand a book; the work is done, the facts observed, the formulæ suggested, the subjects classified. Of course it needs labour, and a following fancy, to peruse the long lucubrations and descriptions of others; but a fine detective sensibility is unnecessary; type is plain, an earnest attention will follow it and know it. To this class Mr. Macaulay belongs; and he has on that very account characteristically maintained that dead authors are more fascinating than living people. "Those friendships," he tells us, "are exposed to no danger from the occurrences by which other attachments are weakened or dissolved. Time glides by; fortune is inconstant; tempers are soured; bonds which seemed indissoluble are daily sundered by interest, by emulation, or by caprice. But no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. That placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentments. These are the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry. In the dead there is no change. Plato is never sullen. Cervantes is never petulant. Demosthenes never comes unseasonably. Dante never stays too long. No difference of political opinion can alienate Cicero. No heresy can excite the horror of Bossuet." But Bossuet is dead; and Cicero was a Roman; and Plato wrote in Greek. Years and manners separate us from the great. After dinner Demosthenes *may* come unseasonably; Dante might stay

long. *We* are alienated from the politician, and have a horror of the theologian. Dreadful idea, having Demosthenes for an intimate friend! He had pebbles in his mouth; he was always urging action; he spoke such good Greek; we cannot dwell on it,—it is too much. Only a mind impassive to our daily life, unalive to bores and evils, to joys and sorrows, with head in literature and heart in boards, incapable of the deepest sympathies, a prey to books, could imagine it. The mass of men have stronger ties and warmer hopes. The exclusive devotion to books tires. We require to love and hate, to act and live.

It is not unnatural that a person of this temperament should preserve a certain aloofness even in the busiest life. Mr. Macaulay has ever done so. He has been in the thick of political warfare, in the van of party conflict. Whatever a keen excitability would select for food and opportunity, has been his; but he has not been excited. He has never thrown himself upon action, he has never followed trivial details with an anxious passion. He has ever been a man for a great occasion. He has been by nature a *deus ex machinâ*. Somebody has had to fetch him. His heart was in Queen Anne's time. When he came, he spoke as Lord Halifax might have spoken. Of course, it may be contended that this is the *eximia ars;* that this solitary removed excellence is particularly and essentially sublime. But, simply and really, greater men have been more deeply "immersed in matter." The highest eloquence quivers with excitement; there is life-blood in the deepest action; a man like Strafford seems flung upon the world. An orator should never talk like an observatory; no coldness should strike upon the hearer.

It is characteristic also that he should be continually thinking of posterity. In general, that expected authority is most ungrateful; those who think of it most, it thinks of least. The way to secure its favour is, to give vivid essential pictures of the life before you; to leave a fresh glowing delineation of the scene to which you were born, of the society to which you have peculiar access. This is gained, not by thinking of your posterity, but by living in society; not by poring on what is to be, but by enjoying what is. That spirit of thorough enjoyment which pervades the great delineators of human life and human manners, was not caused by "being made after supper out of a cheeseparing;" it drew its sustenance from a relishing, enjoying, sensitive life, and the flavour of the description is the reality of that enjoyment. Of course, this is not so in science. You may leave a name by an abstract discovery without having led a thorough or vigorous existence; yet what a name is this! Taylor's theorem will go down to posterity,—possibly its discoverer was for ever dreaming and expecting that it would; but what does pos-

terity know of the deceased Taylor? *Nominis umbra* is rather a compliment; for it is not substantial enough to have a shadow. But in other walks,—say in political oratory, which is the part of Mr. Macaulay's composition in which his value for posterity's opinion is most apparent,—the way to interest posterity is to think but little of it. What gives to the speeches of Demosthenes the interest they have? The intense, vivid, glowing interest of the speaker in all that he is speaking about. Philip is not a person whom "posterity will censure," but the man "whom I hate;" the matter in hand not one whose interest depends on the memory of men, but in which an eager intense nature would have been absorbed if there had been no posterity at all, on which he wished to deliver his own soul. A casual character, so to speak, is natural to the most intense words; externally even they will interest the "after world" more for having interested the present world; they must have a life of *some* place and *some* time before they can have one of all space and all time. Mr. Macaulay's oratory is the very opposite of this. Schoolboyish it is not, for it is the oratory of a very sensible man; but the theme of a schoolboy is not less devoid of the salt of circumstance. The speeches on the Reform Bill have been headed, "Now, a man came up from college and spoke thus;" and, like a college man, he spoke rather to the abstract world than to the present. He knew no more of the people who actually did live in London than of people who would live in London, and there was therefore no reason for speaking to one more than to the other. After years of politics, he speaks so still. He looks on a question (he says) as posterity will look on it; he appeals from this to future generations; he regards existing men as painful prerequisites of great-grandchildren. This seems to proceed, as has been said, from a distant and unimpressible nature. But it is impossible to deny that it has one great advantage; it has made him take pains. A man who speaks to people a thousand years off will naturally speak carefully: he tries to be heard over the clang of ages, over the rumours of myriads. Writing for posterity is like writing on foreign post-paper: you cannot say to a man at Calcutta what you would say to a man at Hackney; you think "the yellow man is a very long way off: this is fine paper, it will go by a ship;" so you try to say something worthy of the ship, something noble, which will keep and travel. So writers like Macaulay, who think of future people, have a respect for future people. Each syllable is solemn, each word distinct. No other author trained to periodical writing has so little of its slovenliness and its imperfection.

This singularly constant contemplation of posterity has often coloured his estimate of his social characters. He has no tolera-

tion for those great men in whom a lively sensibility to momentary honours has prevailed over a consistent reference to the posthumous tribunal. He is justly severe on Lord Bacon: "In his library all his rare powers were under the guidance of an honest ambition, of an enlarged philanthropy, of a sincere love of truth. There no temptation drew him away from the right course. Thomas Aquinas could pay no fees, Duns Scotus could confer no peerages. The 'Master of the Sentences' had no rich reversions in his gift. Far different was the situation of the great philosopher when he came forth from his study and his laboratory to mingle with the crowd which filled the galleries of Whitehall. In all that crowd there was no man equally qualified to render great and lasting services to mankind. But in all that crowd there was not a heart more set on things which no man ought to suffer to be necessary to his happiness,—on things which can often be obtained only by the sacrifice of integrity and honour. To be the leader of the human race in the career of improvement, to found on the ruins of ancient intellectual dynasties a more prosperous and a more enduring empire, to be revered to the latest generations as the most illustrious among the benefactors of mankind,—all this was within his reach. But all this availed him nothing, while some quibbling special pleader was promoted before him to the bench,—while some heavy country gentleman took precedence of him by virtue of a purchased coronet,—while some pander, happy in a fair wife, could obtain a more cordial salute from Buckingham,—while some buffoon, versed in all the latest scandal of the court, could draw a louder laugh from James." Yet a less experience, or a less opportunity of experience, would have warned a mind more observant that the bare desire for long posthumous renown is but a feeble principle in common human nature. Bacon had as much of it as most men. The keen excitability to this world's temptations must be opposed by more exciting impulses, by more retarding discouragements, by conscience, by religion, by fear. If you would vanquish earth, you must "invent heaven." It is the fiction of a cold abstractedness that the possible respect of unseen people can commonly be more desired than the certain homage of existing people.

In a more conspicuous manner the chill nature of the most brilliant among English historians is shown in his defective dealing with the passionate eras of our history. He has never been attracted, or not proportionably attracted, by the singular mixture of heroism and slavishness, of high passion and base passion, which mark the Tudor period. The same defect is apparent in his treatment of a period on which he has written powerfully—

the time of the civil wars. He has never in the highest manner appreciated either of the two great characters—the Puritan and the Cavalier—which are the form and life of those years. What historian, indeed, has ever estimated the Cavalier character? There is Clarendon—the grave, rhetorical, decorous lawyer—piling words, congealing arguments, very stately, a little grim. There is Hume—the Scotch metaphysician—who has made out the best case for such people as never were, for a Charles who never died, for a Strafford who would never have been attainted, —a saving, calculating north-countryman,—fat, impassive,—who lived on eightpence a day. What have these people to do with an enjoying English gentleman? It is easy for a *doctrinaire* to bear a *post-mortem* examination,—it is much the same whether he be alive or dead; but not so with those who live during their life, whose essence is existence, whose being is in animation. There seem to be some characters who are not made for history, as there are some who are not made for old age. A Cavalier seems always young. The buoyant life arises before us rich in hope, strong in vigour, irregular in action; men young and ardent, framed in the "prodigality of nature," open to every enjoyment, alive to every passion, eager, impulsive; brave without discipline, noble without principle, prizing luxury, despising danger, capable of high sentiment, but in each of whom the

> "Addiction was to courses vain;
> His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow,
> His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports,
> And never noted in him any study,
> Any retirement, any sequestration
> From open haunts and popularity."

We see these men setting forth or assembling to defend their king and church; and we see it without surprise: a rich daring loves danger; a deep excitability likes excitement. If we look around us, we may see what is analogous. It has been said that the battle of the Alma was won by the "uneducated gentry;" the "uneducated gentry" would be Cavaliers now. The political sentiment is part of the character. The essence of Toryism is enjoyment. Talk of the ways of spreading a wholesome Conservatism throughout this country: give painful lectures, distribute weary tracts (and perhaps this is as well—you may be able to give an argumentative answer to a few objections, you may diffuse a distinct notion of the dignified dullness of politics); but as far as communicating and establishing your creed are concerned—try a little pleasure. The way to keep up old customs is, to enjoy old customs; the way to be satisfied with the present state of things is, to enjoy that state of things. Over the "Cavalier" mind this world passes with a thrill of delight; there is an exultation in

a daily event, zest in the "regular thing," joy at an old feast. Sir Walter Scott is a curious instance of this. Every incident, habit, practice of old Scotland was connected and inseparably associated in his mind with strong genial enjoyment. To propose to touch one of those institutions, to abolish one of those practices, was to touch a personal pleasure—a point on which his mind reposed, a thing of memory and hope. So long as this world is this world, will a buoyant life be the proper source of an animated Conservatism. The "church-and-king" enthusiasm has even a deeper connection with this peculiar character. Carlyle has said, in his vivid way, "Two or three young gentlemen have said, 'Go to, I will *make* a religion.'" This is the exact opposite of what the irregular enjoying man can think or conceive. What is he, with his untrained mind and his changeful heart and his ruleless practice, to create a creed? Is the gushing life to be asked to construct a cistern? is the varying heart to be its own master, the evil practice its own guide? Sooner will a ship invent its own rudder, devise its own pilot, than the buoyant eager soul will find out the doctrine which is to restrain it. The very intellect is a type of the confusion of the soul. It has little arguments on a thousand subjects, hearsay sayings, original flashes small and bright, struck from the heedless mind by the strong impact of the world. And it has nothing else. It has no systematic knowledge; it has a hatred of regular attention. What can an understanding of this sort do with refined questioning or subtle investigation? It is obliged in a sense by its very nature to take what comes; it is overshadowed in a manner by the religion to which it is born; its conscience tells it that it owes obedience to something; it craves to worship something; that something, in both cases, it takes from the past. "Thou hast not chosen me, but I have chosen thee," might his faith say to a believer of this kind. A certain bigotry is altogether natural to him. His creed seems to him a primitive fact, as certain and evident as the stars.—The political faith (for it is a faith) of these persons is of a kind analogous. The virtue of loyalty assumes in them a passionate aspect, and overflows, as it were, all the intellect which should be devoted to the topic. This virtue, this need of our nature, arises, as political philosophers tell us, from the conscious necessity which man is under of obeying an external moral rule. We feel that we are by nature and by the constitution of all things under an obligation to conform to a certain standard, and we seek to find or to establish in this outer sphere an authority which shall enforce it, shall aid us in compelling others and likewise in mastering ourselves. When a man thoroughly possessed with this principle comes in contact with the institution of civil government as it now exists and as it

has always existed, he finds what he wants—he discovers an authority; and he feels bound to submit to it. We do not, of course, mean that all this takes place distinctly and consciously in the mind of the person; on the contrary, the class of minds most subject to its influence are precisely those which have in general the least defined and accurate consciousness of their own operations, or of what befals them. In matter of fact, they find themselves under the control of laws and of a polity from the earliest moment that they can remember, and they obey it from habit and custom years before they know any thing else. Only in later life, when distinct thought is from some outward occurrence forced upon them, do they feel the necessity of some such power; and in proportion to their passionate and impulsive disposition they feel it the more. It has in a less degree on them the same effect which military discipline has in a greater. It braces them to defined duties, and subjects them to a known authority. Quieter minds find this authority in an internal conscience; but in riotous natures its still small voice is lost if it be not echoed in loud harsh tones from the firm and outer world:

> "Their breath is agitation, and their life
> A storm whereon they ride."

From without they crave a bridle and a curb. The doctrine of non-resistance is no *accident* of the Cavalier character, though it seems at first sight singular in so eager, tumultuous a disposition. So inconsistent is human nature, that it proceeds from the very extremity of that tumult. They know and feel that they cannot allow themselves to question the authority which is upon them; they feel its necessity too acutely, their intellect is untrained in subtle disquisitions, their conscience fluctuating, their passions rising. They know that if once they depart from that authority, their whole soul will be in tumult. As a riotous state tends to fall under a martial tyranny, a passionate mind tends to subject itself to an extrinsic law—to enslave itself to an outward discipline. "That is what the king says, boy; and that was ever enough for Sir Henry Lee." An hereditary monarchy is, indeed, the very embodiment of this principle. The authority is so defined, so clearly vested, so evidently intelligible; it descends so distinctly from the past, it is imposed so conspicuously from without. Any thing free refers to the people; any thing elected seems self-chosen. "The divinity that doth hedge a king" consists in his evidently representing an unmade, unchosen, hereditary duty.

The greatness of this character is not in Mr. Macaulay's way, and its faults are. Its license affronts him; its riot alienates

him. He is for ever contrasting the dissoluteness of Prince Rupert's horse with the restraint of Cromwell's pikemen. Its deep enjoying nature finds no sympathy. The brilliant style passes forward: we dwell on its brilliancy, but it is cold. He has no tears for that warm life, no tenderness for that extinct joy. The ignorance of the character, too, moves his wrath: "They were ignorant of what every schoolgirl knows." Their loyalty to their sovereign is the devotion of the Egyptians to the god Apis, who selected "a calf to adore." Their non-resistance offends the philosopher; their license is commented on with the tone of a precisian. Their indecorum does not suit the dignity of the historian. Their rich free nature is unappreciated; the tingling intensity of their joy is unnoticed. In a word, there is something of the schoolboy about the Cavalier—there is somewhat of a schoolmaster about the historian.

It might be thought, at first sight, that the insensibility and coldness which are unfavourable to the appreciation of the Cavalier would be particularly favourable to that of the Puritan. It might be thought that a natural aloofness from things earthly would dispose a man to the doctrines of a sect which enjoins above all other commandments abstinence and aloofness from those things. In Mr. Macaulay's case it certainly has had no such consequence. He was bred up in the circle which more than any other has resembled that of the greatest and best Puritans—in the circle which has presented the evangelical doctrine in its most celebrated, influential, and not its least genial form. Yet he has revolted against it. The bray of "Exeter Hall" is a phrase which has become celebrated: it is an odd one for his father's son. The whole course of his personal fortunes, the entire scope of his historical narrative, show an utter want of sympathy with the Puritan disposition. It would be idle to quote passages; it will be enough to recollect the contrast between the estimate—say of Cromwell—by Carlyle and that by Macaulay, to be aware of the enormous discrepancy. The one's manner evinces an instinctive sympathy, the other's an instinctive aversion.

We believe that this is but a consequence of the same impassibility of nature which we have said so much of. M. Montalembert, in a striking *éloge* on a French historian—a man of the Southey type—after speaking of his life in Paris during youth (a youth cast in the early and exciting years of the first revolution, and of the prelude to it), and graphically portraying a man subject to scepticism, but not given to vice; staid in habits, but unbelieving in opinion; without faith and without irregularity,—winds up the whole by the sentence, that "*he was hardened at once against good and evil.*" In his view,

the insensibility, which was a guard against exterior temptation, was also a hindrance to inward belief: and there is a philosophy in this. The nature of man is not two things, but one thing. We have not one set of affections, hopes, sensibilities, to be affected by the present world, and another and a different to be affected by the invisible world: we are moved by grandeur, or we are not; we are stirred by sublimity, or we are not; we hunger after righteousness, or we do not; we hate vice, or we do not; we are passionate, or not passionate; loving, or not loving; cold, or not cold; our heart is dull, or it is wakeful; our soul alive, or it is dead. Deep under the surface of the intellect lies the *stratum* of the passions, of the intense, peculiar, simple impulses which constitute the heart of man; there is the eager essence, the primitive desiring being. What stirs this latent being is another question. In general it is stirred by every thing. Sluggish natures are stirred little, wild natures are stirred much; but all are stirred somewhat. It is not important whether the object be in the visible or invisible world: whoso loves what he has seen, will love what he has not seen; whoso hates what he has seen, will hate what he has not seen. Creation is, as it were, but the garment of the Creator: whoever is blind to the beauty on its surface, will be insensible to the beauty beneath; whoso is dead to the sublimity before his senses, will be dull to that which he imagines; whoso is untouched by the visible man, will be unmoved by the invisible God. These are no new ideas; and the conspicuous evidence of history confirms them. Every where the deeply religious organisation has been deeply sensitive to this world. If we compare what are called sacred and profane literatures, the depth of human affection is deepest in the sacred. A warmth as of life is on the Hebrew, a chill as of marble is on the Greek. In that literature itself the most tenderly-religious character is the most sensitive to earth. Along every lyric of the great Psalmist thrills a deep spirit of human enjoyment; he was alive as a child to the simple aspects of the world; the very errors of his mingled career are but those to which the open, impulsive, warm-breathed character is most prone; its principle, so to speak, was a tremulous passion for that which he had seen, as well as that which he had not seen. It is no paradox, therefore, to say, that the same character which least appreciates the impulsive and ardent Cavalier is also the most likely not to appreciate the warm zeal of an overpowering devotion.

Some years ago it would have been necessary to show at length that the Puritans came at all near to this idea. The notion had been that they were fanatics, who simulated zeal, and

hypocrites, who misquoted the Old Testament. A new era has arrived; one of the great discoveries which the competition of authors has introduced into historical researches has attained a singular popularity; the beam has gone into the opposite extreme. We are rather now, in general, in danger of holding too high an estimate of the puritanical character than a too low or contemptuous one. Among the disciples of Carlyle it is considered that having been a Puritan is the next best thing to having been in Germany. But though we cannot sympathise with every thing that the modern expounders of the new theory are prone to allege, and though we should not select for praise the exact peculiarities most agreeable to the slightly grim "gospel of earnestness," we are thoroughly aware of the great service which they have rendered to English history. No one will now ever overlook, that in the greater, in the original Puritans—in Cromwell, for example—the whole basis of the character was a passionate, deep, rich, religious organisation.

This is not in Mr. Macaulay's way. It is not that he is irreligious; far from it. "Divines of all persuasions," he tells us, "are agreed that there is a religion;" and he acquiesces in their teaching. But he has no passionate self-questionings, no indomitable fears, no asking perplexities. He is probably pleased at the exemption. He has praised Lord Bacon for a similar want of interest. "Nor did he ever meddle with those enigmas which have puzzled hundreds of generations, and will puzzle hundreds more. He said nothing about the grounds of moral obligation, or the freedom of the human will. He had no inclination to employ himself in labours resembling those of the damned in the Grecian Tartarus—to spin for ever on the same wheel round the same pivot. He lived in an age in which disputes on the most subtle points of divinity excited an intense interest throughout Europe; and no where more than in England. He was placed in the very thick of the conflict. He was in power at the time of the Synod of Dort, and must for months have been daily deafened with talk about election, reprobation, and final perseverance. Yet we do not remember a line in his works from which it can be inferred that he was either a Calvinist or an Arminian. While the world was resounding with the noise of a disputatious philosophy and a disputatious theology, the Baconian school, like Alworthy seated between Square and Thwackum, preserved a calm neutrality,—half-scornful, half-benevolent,—and, content with adding to the sum of practical good, left the war of words to those who liked it." This may be the writing of good sense, but it is not the expression of an anxious or passionate religious nature.

Such is the explanation of his not prizing so highly as he should prize the essential excellences of the Puritan character. He is defective in the one point in which they were very great; he is eminent in the very point in which they were most defective. A spirit of easy cheerfulness pervades his writings, a pleasant geniality overflows in history; the rigid asceticism, the pain for pain's sake of the Puritan is altogether alien to him. Retribution he would deny; sin is hardly a part of his creed. His religion is one of thanksgiving. His notion of philosophy—it would be a better notion of his own writing—is *illustrans commoda vitæ*.

The history of the English Revolution is the very history for a person of this character. It is eminently an unimpassioned movement. It requires no appreciation of the Cavalier or of the zealot; no sympathy with the romance of this world; no inclination to pass beyond, and absorb the mind's energies in another. It had neither the rough enthusiasm of barbarism nor the delicate grace of high civilisation; the men who conducted it had neither the deep spirit of Cromwell's Puritans nor the chivalric loyalty of the enjoying English gentleman. They were hard-headed sensible men, who knew that politics were a kind of business, that the essence of business is compromise, of practicality concession. They drove no theory to excess; for they had no theory. Their passions did not hurry them away; for their temperament was calm, and their reason calculating and still. Locke is the type of the best character of his era. There is nothing in him which a historian such as we have described could fail to comprehend, or could not sympathise with when he did comprehend. He was the very reverse of a Cavalier; he came of a Puritan stock; he retained through life a kind of chilled Puritanism: he had nothing of its excessive, overpowering, interior zeal, but he retained the formal decorum which it had given to the manners, the solid earnestness of its intellect, the heavy respectability of its character. In all the nations across which Puritanism has passed you may notice something of its indifference to this world's lighter enjoyments; no one of them has been quite able to retain its singular interest in what is beyond the veil of time and sense. The generation to which we owe our revolution was in the first stage of the descent. Locke thought a zealot a dangerous person, and a poet little better than a rascal. It has been said, with perhaps an allusion to Macaulay, that our historians have held that "all the people who lived before 1688 were either knaves or fools." This is, of course, an exaggeration; but those who have considered what sort of person a historian is likely to be, will not be surprised at his preference for the people of

that era. They had the equable sense which he appreciates; they had not the deep animated passions to which his nature is insensible.

But though Mr. Macaulay shares in the common temperament of historians, and in the sympathy with, and appreciation of, the characters most congenial to that temperament, he is singularly contrasted with them in one respect—he has a vivid fancy, they have a dull one. History is generally written on the principle that human life is a transaction; that people come to it with defined intentions and a calm self-possessed air, as stock-jobbers would buy "omnium," as timber-merchants buy "best middling;" people are alike, and things are alike; every thing is a little dull, every one a little slow; manners are not depicted, traits are not noticed; the narrative is confined to those great transactions which can be made intelligible without any imaginative delineation of their accompaniments. There are two kinds of things—those which you need only to *understand*, and those which you need also to *imagine*. That a man bought nine hundredweight of hops is an intelligible idea—you do not want the hops delineated or the man described; that he went into society suggests an inquiry—you want to know what the society was like, and how far he was fitted to be there. The great business-transactions of the political world are of the intelligible description. Mr. Macaulay has himself said: "A history, in which every particular incident may be true, may on the whole be false. The circumstances which have most influence on the happiness of mankind, the changes of manners and morals, the transition of communities from poverty to wealth, from knowledge to ignorance, from ferocity to humanity,—these are, for the most part, noiseless revolutions. Their progress is rarely indicated by what historians are pleased to call important events. They are not achieved by armies, or enacted by senates. They are sanctioned by no treaties, and recorded in no archives. They are carried on in every school, in every church, behind ten thousand counters, at ten thousand firesides. The upper current of society presents no certain criterion by which we can judge of the direction in which the under current flows. We read of defeats and victories; but we know that nations may be miserable amidst victories, and prosperous amidst defeats. We read of the fall of wise ministers, and of the rise of profligate favourites; but we must remember how small a proportion the good or evil effected by a single statesman can bear to the good or evil of a great social system." But of this sluggishness of imagination he has certainly no trace himself. He is willing to be "behind ten thousand counters," to be a guest at "ten thousand fire-

sides." He is willing to see "ordinary men as they appear in their ordinary business and in their ordinary pleasures." He has no objection to "mingle in the crowds of the Exchange and the coffee-house." He would "obtain admittance to the convivial table and the domestic hearth." So far as his dignity will permit, "he will bear with vulgar expressions." And a singular efficacy of fancy gives him the power to do so. Some portion of the essence of human nature is concealed from him; but all its accessories are at his command. He delineates any trait; he can paint, and justly paint, any manners he chooses.

"A perfect historian," he tells us, "is he in whose work the character and spirit of an age is exhibited in miniature. He relates no fact, he attributes no expression to his characters, which is not authenticated by sufficient testimony; but by judicious selection, rejection, and arrangement, he gives to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction. In his narrative a due subordination is observed—some transactions are prominent, others retire; but the scale on which he represents them is increased or diminished, not according to the dignity of the persons concerned in them, but according to the degree in which they elucidate the condition of society and the nature of man. He shows us the court, the camp, and the senate; but he shows us also the nation. He considers no anecdote, no peculiarity of manner, no familiar saying, as too insignificant for his notice, which is not too insignificant to illustrate the operation of laws, of religion, and of education, and to mark the progress of the human mind. Men will not merely be described, but will be made intimately known to us. The changes of manners will be indicated, not merely by a few general phrases, or a few extracts from statistical documents, but by appropriate images presented in every line. If a man, such as we are supposing, should write the history of England, he would assuredly not omit the battles, the sieges, the negotiations, the seditions, the ministerial changes; but with these he would intersperse the details which are the charm of historical romances. At Lincoln Cathedral there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice out of the pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master. It is so far superior to every other in the church, that, according to the tradition, the vanquished artist killed himself from mortification. Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner, has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which, even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs. But

a truly great historian would reclaim those materials which the novelist has appropriated. The history of the government, and the history of the people, would be exhibited in that mode in which alone they can be exhibited justly, in inseparable conjunction and intermixture. We should not then have to look for the wars and votes of the puritans in Clarendon, and for their phraseology in *Old Mortality*; for one half of King James in Hume, and for the other half in the *Fortunes of Nigel*." So far as the graphic description of the exterior mode of life goes, he has undeniably realised his idea.

This union of a flowing fancy with an insensible organisation is very rare. In general a delicate fancy is joined with a poetic organisation. Exactly why, it would be difficult to explain. It is for metaphysicians in large volumes to explain the genesis of the human faculties; but, as a fact, it seems to be clear that, for the most part, imaginative men are most sensitive to the poetic side of human life and natural scenery. They are drawn by a strong instinct to what is sublime, grand, and beautiful. They do not care for the coarse business of life. They dislike to be cursed with its ordinary cares. Their nature is vivid; it is interested by all which naturally interests; it dwells on the great, the graceful, and the grand. On this account it naturally runs away from history. The very name of it is too oppressive. Are not all such works written in the *Index Expurgatorius* of the genial satirist as works which it was impossible to read? The coarse and cumbrous matter revolts the soul of the fine and fanciful voluptuary. Take it as you will, human life is like the earth on which man dwells. There are exquisite beauties, grand imposing objects, scattered here and there; but the spaces between these are wide; the mass of common clay is huge; the dead level of vacant life, of commonplace geography, is immense. The poetic nature cannot bear the preponderance; it seeks relief in selected scenes, in special topics, in favourite beauties. History, which is the record of human existence, is a faithful representative of it, at least in this: the poetic mind cannot bear the weight of its narrations and the dullness of its events.

This peculiarity of character gives to Mr. Macaulay's writing one of its most curious characteristics. He throws over matters which are in their nature dry and dull transactions,—budgets, bills,—the charm of fancy which a poetical mind employs to enhance and set forth the charm of what is beautiful. An attractive style is generally devoted to what is in itself specially attractive; here it is devoted to subjects which are often unattractive, are sometimes even repelling, at the best are com-

monly neutral, not inviting attention if they do not excite dislike. In these new volumes there is a currency-reform, pages on Scotch Presbyterianism, a heap of parliamentary debates. Who could be expected to make any thing interesting of such topics? It is not cheerful to read in the morning papers the debates of yesterday, though they happened last night; one cannot like a Calvinistic divine when we see him in the pulpit; it is awful to read on the currency even when it concerns the bank-notes which we use. How, then, can we care for a narrative when the divine is dead, the shillings extinct, the whole topic of the debate forgotten and past away? Yet such is the charm of style, so great is the charm of very skilful words, of narration which is always passing forward, of illustration which always hits the mark, that such subjects as these not only become interesting, but very interesting. The proof is evident. No book is so sought after. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said "all members of parliament had read it." What other books could ever be fancied to have been read by them? A county member—a real county member—hardly reads two volumes *per* existence. Years ago Macaulay said a History of England might become more in demand at the circulating-libraries than the last novel. He has actually made his words true. It is no longer a phrase of rhetoric, it is a simple fact.

The explanation of this remarkable notoriety is, the contrast of the topic, and the treatment. Those who read for the sake of entertainment are attracted by the one; those who read for the sake of instruction are attracted by the other. He has something that suits the readers of Mr. Hallam; he has something which will please the readers of Mr. Thackeray. The first wonder to find themselves reading such a style; the last are astonished at reading on such topics—at finding themselves studying by casualty: only a buoyant fancy and an impassive temperament could produce a book so combining weight with levity.

Something similar may be remarked of the writings of a still greater man—of Edmund Burke. The contrast of the manner of all his more characteristic writings to their matter is very remarkable. He also threw over the detail of business and of politics those graces and attractions of manner which seem in some sort inconsistent with them; which are adapted for topics more intrinsically sublime and beautiful. It was for this reason that Hazlitt asserted that "no woman ever cared for Burke's writings." The matter, he said, was "hard and dry," and no superficial glitter or eloquence could make it agreeable to those who liked what is in its very nature fine and delicate. The

exquisite narration has in a great degree, in Mr. Macaulay's case, supplied the deficiency; but it may be *perhaps* remarked, that some trace of the same phenomenon has again occurred, from similar causes, and that his popularity, though great among both sexes, is in some sense more masculine than feminine. The absence of this charm of narration, to which accomplished women are, it would seem, peculiarly sensitive, is very characteristic of Burke. His mind was the reverse of historical. Although he had rather a coarse incondite temperament, not finely susceptible to the best influences, to the most exquisite beauties of the world in which he lived, he yet lived in that world thoroughly and completely. He did not take an interest, as a poet does, in the sublime because it is sublime, in the beautiful because it is beautiful; but he had the passions of more ordinary men in a degree and of an intensity which ordinary men may be most thankful that they have not. On no one has the intense faculty of intellectual hatred—the hatred which the absolute dogmatist has for those in whom he incarnates and personifies the opposing dogma—been fiercer or stronger; in no one has the intense ambition to rule and govern, in scarcely any one has the daily ambition of the daily politician, been fiercer and stronger; he, if any man, cast himself upon his time. Take up one of his speeches after reading one of Macaulay's: you seem transported to another sphere. The fierce living interest of the one contrasts with the cold rhetorical interest of the other; you are in a different part of the animal kingdom; you have left the viviparous intellect, you have left products warm and struggling with hasty life; you have reached the oviparous, and products smooth and polished, cold and stately.

In addition to this impassive nature, inclining him to write on past transactions—to this fancy, enabling him to adorn and describe them—Mr. Macaulay has a marvellous memory to recall them; and what we may call the Scotch intellect, enabling him to conceive them. His memory is the most obvious quality of his writing. An enormous reading seems always present to him. No effort seems wanted—no mental excogitation. According to his own description of a like faculty, "it would have been strange indeed if you had asked for any thing that was not to be found in that immense storehouse. The article you required was not only there, it was ready. It was in its own compartment. In a moment it was brought down, unpacked, and explained." He has a literary illustration for every thing; and his fancy enables him to make a skilful use of his wealth. He always selects the exact likeness of the idea which he wishes to explain. And though it be less obvious, yet his writing would

have been deficient in one of its most essential characteristics if it had not been for what we have called his Scotch intellect, which is a curious matter to explain. It may be thought that Adam Smith had little in common with Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter was always making fun of him; telling odd tales of his abstraction and singularity; and not obscurely hinting, that a man who could hardly put on his own coat, and certainly could not buy his own dinner, was scarcely fit to decide on the proper course of industry and the mercantile dealings of nations. Yet when Sir Walter's own works come to be closely examined, they will be found to contain a good deal of political economy of a certain sort,—and not a very bad sort. Any one who will study his description of the Highland clans in *Waverley;* his observations on the industrial side (if so it is to be called) of the Border-life; his plans for dealing with the poor of his own time,—will be struck not only with a plain sagacity, which we could equal in England, but with the digested accuracy and theoretical completeness of them. You might cut paragraphs, even from his lighter writings, which would be thought acute in the *Wealth of Nations*. There seems to be in the genius of the Scotch people —fostered, no doubt, by the abstract metaphysical education of their Universities, but also, by way of natural taste, supporting that education and rendering it possible and popular—a power of reducing human actions to formulæ or principles. An instance is now in a high place. People who are not lawyers,—rural people, who have sense of their own, but have no access to the general repute and opinion which expresses the collective sense of the great world,—never can be brought to believe that Lord Campbell is a great man. They read his speeches in the House of Lords—his occasional flights of eloquence on the bench —his attempts at pathos—his stupendous *gaucheries*,—and they cannot be persuaded that a person so guilty of such things can have really first-rate talent. If you ask them how he came to be Chief-Justice of England, they mutter something angry, and "Well, Scotchmen *do* get on somehow." And this is the true explanation. In spite of a hundred defects, Lord Campbell has the Scotch faculties in perfection. He reduces legal matters to a sound broad principle better than any man who is now a judge. He has a steady, comprehensive, abstract, distinct consistency, which elaborates a formula and adheres to a formula; and it is this which has raised him from a plain—a very plain— Scotch adventurer to be Lord Chief-Justice of England. Mr. Macaulay has this too. Among his more brilliant qualities, it has escaped the attention of critics; the more so, because his powers of exposition and expression make it impossible to con-

ceive for a moment that the amusing matter we are reading is really Scotch economy.

"During the interval," he tells us, "between the Restoration and the Revolution the riches of the nation had been rapidly increasing. Thousands of busy men found every Christmas that, after the expenses of the year's housekeeping had been defrayed out of the year's income, a surplus remained; and how that surplus was to be employed was a question of some difficulty. In our time, to invest such a surplus, at something more than three per cent, on the best security that has ever been known in the world, is the work of a few minutes. But in the seventeenth century a lawyer, a physician, a retired merchant, who had saved some thousands and who wished to place them safely and profitably, was often greatly embarrassed. Three generations earlier, a man who had accumulated wealth in a profession generally purchased real property or lent his savings on mortgage. But the number of acres in the kingdom had remained the same; and the value of those acres, though it had greatly increased, had by no means increased so fast as the quantity of capital which was seeking for employment. Many too wished to put their money where they could find it at an hour's notice, and looked about for some species of property which could be more readily transferred than a house or a field. A capitalist might lend on bottomry or on personal security: but, if he did so, he ran a great risk of losing interest and principal. There were a few joint-stock companies, among which the East India Company held the foremost place; but the demand for the stock of such companies was far greater than the supply. Indeed the cry for a new East India Company was chiefly raised by persons who had found difficulty in placing their savings at interest on good security. So great was that difficulty, that the practice of hoarding was common. We are told that the father of Pope the poet, who retired from business in the City about the time of the Revolution, carried to a retreat in the country a strong box containing near twenty thousand pounds, and took out from time to time what was required for household expenses; and it is highly probable that this was not a solitary case. At present the quantity of coin which is hoarded by private persons is so small, that it would, if brought forth, make no perceptible addition to the circulation. But, in the earlier part of the reign of William the Third, all the greatest writers on currency were of opinion that a very considerable mass of gold and silver was hidden in secret drawers and behind wainscots.

The natural effect of this state of things was, that a crowd of projectors, ingenious and absurd, honest and knavish, employed themselves in devising new schemes for the employment of redundant capital. It was about the year 1688 that the word stockjobber was first heard in London. In the short space of four years a crowd of companies, every one of which confidently held out to subscribers the hope of immense gains, sprang into existence: the Insurance Company, the Paper Company, the Lutestring Company, the Pearl-Fishery Company,

the Glass-Bottle Company, the Alum Company, the Blythe Coal Company, the Swordblade Company. There was a Tapestry Company which would soon furnish pretty hangings for all the parlours of the middle class and for all the bedchambers of the higher. There was a Copper Company which proposed to explore the mines of England, and held out a hope that they would prove not less valuable than those of Potosi. There was a Diving Company which undertook to bring up precious effects from shipwrecked vessels, and which announced that it had laid in a stock of wonderful machines resembling complete suits of armour. In front of the helmet was a huge glass eye like that of a cyclop; and out of the crest went a pipe, through which the air was to be admitted. The whole process was exhibited on the Thames. Fine gentlemen and fine ladies were invited to the show, were hospitably regaled, and were delighted by seeing the divers in their panoply descend into the river and return laden with old iron and ship's tackle. There was a Greenland Fishing Company which could not fail to drive the Dutch whalers and herring-busses out of the Northern Ocean. There was a Tanning Company which promised to furnish leather superior to the best that was brought from Turkey or Russia. There was a society which undertook the office of giving gentlemen a liberal education on low terms, and which assumed the sounding name of the Royal Academies Company. In a pompous advertisement it was announced that the directors of the Royal Academies Company had engaged the best masters in every branch of knowledge, and were about to issue twenty thousand tickets at twenty shillings each. There was to be a lottery: two thousand prizes were to be drawn; and the fortunate holders of the prizes were to be taught, at the charge of the company, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, conic sections, trigonometry, heraldry, japanning, fortification, bookkeeping, and the art of playing the theorbo. Some of these companies took large mansions and printed their advertisements in gilded letters. Others, less ostentatious, were content with ink, and met at coffee-houses in the neighbourhood of the Royal Exchange. Jonathan's and Garraway's were in a constant ferment with brokers, buyers, sellers, meetings of directors, meetings of proprietors. Time-bargains soon came into fashion. Extensive combinations were formed, and monstrous fables were circulated, for the purpose of raising or depressing the price of shares. Our country witnessed for the first time those phenomena with which a long experience has made us familiar. A mania of which the symptoms were essentially the same with those of the mania of 1720, of the mania of 1825, of the mania of 1845, seized the public mind. An impatience to be rich, a contempt for those slow but sure gains which are the proper reward of industry, patience, and thrift, spread through society. The spirit of the cogging dicers of Whitefriars took possession of the grave senators of the city, wardens of trades, deputies, aldermen. It was much easier and much more lucrative to put forth a lying prospectus announcing a new stock, to persuade ignorant people that the dividends could not fall short of twenty per

cent, and to part with five thousand pounds of this imaginary wealth for ten thousand solid guineas, than to load a ship with a well-chosen cargo for Virginia or the Levant. Every day some new bubble was puffed into existence, rose buoyant, shone bright, burst, and was forgotten."

You will not find the cause of panics so accurately explained in the clearest of political economists—in the Scotch M'Culloch.

These peculiarities of character and mind may be very conspicuously traced through the *History of England*, and in the *Essays*. Their first and most striking quality is the *intellectual entertainment* which they afford. This, as practical readers know, is a kind of sensation which is not very common, and which is productive of great and healthy enjoyment. It is quite distinct from the amusement which is derived from common light works. This is very great; but it is passive. The mind of the reader is not awakened to any independent action: you see the farce, but you see it without effort; not simply without painful effort, but without any perceptible mental activity whatever. Again, it is contrasted with the high enjoyment of consciously following pure and difficult reasoning: this sensation is a sort of sublimated pain. The highest and most intense action of the intellectual powers is, like the most intense action of the bodily, on a high mountain. We climb and climb: we have a thrill of pleasure, but we have also a sense of effort and anguish. Nor is the sensation to be confounded with that which we experience from the best and purest works of art. The pleasure of high tragedy is also painful: the whole soul is stretched; the spirit pants; the passions scarcely breathe: it is a rapt and eager moment, too intense for continuance—so overpowering, that we scarcely know whether it be joy or pain. The sensation of intellectual entertainment is altogether distinguished from these by not being accompanied by any pain, and yet being consequent on, or being contemporaneous with, a high and constant exercise of mind. While we read works which so delight us, we are conscious that we are delighted, and are also conscious that we are not idle. The two opposite pleasures of indolence and exertion seem for a moment combined. A sort of elasticity pervades us; thoughts come easily and quickly; we seem capable of many ideas; we follow cleverness till we fancy that we are clever. This feeling is only given by writers who stimulate the mind just to the degree which is pleasant, and who do not stimulate it more; who exact a moderate exercise of mind, and who seduce us to it insensibly. This can only be, of course, by a charm of style; by the inexplicable *je ne sais quoi* which attracts our atten-

tion; by constantly raising and constantly satisfying our curiosity. And there seems to be a further condition. A writer who wishes to produce this constant effect must not appeal to any single separate faculty of mind, but to the whole mind at once. The fancy tires, if you appeal only to the fancy; the understanding is aware of its dullness, if you appeal only to the understanding; the curiosity is soon satiated unless you pique it with variety. This is the very opportunity for Macaulay. He has fancy, sense, variety, abundance; he appeals to both fancy and understanding. There is no sense of effort. His books read like an elastic dream. There is a continual sense of instruction; for who had an idea of the transactions before? The emotions, too, which he appeals to are the easy admiration, the cool disapprobation, the gentle worldly curiosity, which quietly excite us, never fatigue us,—which we could bear for ever. To read Macaulay for a day, would be to pass a day of easy thought, of pleasant placid emotion.

Nor is this a small matter. In a state of high civilisation it is no simple matter to give multitudes a large and healthy enjoyment. The old bodily enjoyments are dying out; there is no room for them any more; the complex apparatus of civilisation cumbers the ground. We are thrown back upon the mind, and the mind is a barren thing. It can spin little from itself: few that describe what they see are in the way to discern much. Exaggerated emotions, violent incidents, monstrous characters crowd our canvas; they are the resource of a weakness which would obtain the fame of strength. Reading is about to become a series of collisions against aggravated breakers, of beatings with imaginary surf. In such times a book of sensible attraction is a public benefit; it diffuses a sensation of vigour through the multitude. Perhaps there is a danger that the extreme popularity of the manner may make many persons fancy they understand the matter more perfectly than they do: some readers may become conceited; several boys believe that they too are Macaulays. Yet, duly allowing for this defect, it is a great good that so many people should learn so much on such topics so agreeably; that they should feel that they can understand them; that their minds should be stimulated by a consciousness of health and power.

The same peculiarities influence the style of the narrative. The art of narration is the art of writing in hooks-and-eyes. The principle consists in making the appropriate thought follow the appropriate thought, the proper fact the proper fact; in first preparing the mind for what is to come, and then letting it come. This can only be achieved by keeping continually and

insensibly before the mind of the reader some one object, character, or image, whose variations are the events of the story, whose unity is the unity of it. Scott, for example, keeps before you the mind of some one person,—that of Morton in *Old Mortality*, of Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, of Lovel in *The Antiquary*,—whose fortunes and mental changes are the central incidents, whose personality the string of unity. It is the defect of the great Scotch novels that their central figure is frequently not their most interesting topic,—that their interest is often rather in the accessories than in the essential principle—in that which surrounds the centre of narration rather than in that centre itself. Scott tries to meet this objection by varying the mind which he selects for his unit; in one of his chapters it is one character, in the next a different; he shifts the scene from the hero to the heroine, from the 'Protector of the settlement' of the story to the evil being who mars it perpetually: but when narrowly examined, the principle of his narration will be found nearly always the same, —the changes in the position—external or mental—of some one human being. The most curiously opposite sort of narration is that of Hume. He seems to carry a *view*, as the moderns call it, through every thing. He forms to himself a metaphysical—that perhaps is a harsh word—an intellectual abstracted conception of the time and character under review; and the gradual working out or development of that view is the principle of his narration. He tells the story of the conception. You rise from his pages without much remembrance or regard for the mere people, but with a distinct clear notion of an elaborated view, skilfully abstracted and perpetually impressed upon you. A critic of detail should scarcely require a better task than to show how insensibly and artfully the subtle historian infuses his conception among the facts, indicates somehow—you can scarcely say how—their relation to it; strings them, as it were, upon it, concealing it in seeming beneath them, while in fact it altogether determines their form, their grouping, and their consistency. The style of Macaulay is very different from either of these. It is a diorama of political pictures. You seem to begin with a brilliant picture,—its colours are distinct, its lines are firm; on a sudden it changes, at first gradually, you can scarcely tell how or in what, but truly and unmistakably,—a slightly different picture is before you; then the second vision seems to change,—it too is another and yet the same; then the third shines forth and fades; and so without end. The unity of this delineation is the identity—the apparent identity—of the picture; on no two moments does it seem quite different, on no two is it identically the same. It grows and alters as our bodies would appear to alter and grow, if you

could fancy any one watching them, and being conscious of their daily little changes; the events are picturesque variations; the unity is a unity of political painting, of represented external form. It is evident how suitable this is to a writer whose understanding is solid, whose sense is political, whose fancy is fine and delineative.

To this merit of Macaulay is to be added another. No one describes so well what we may call the *spectacle* of a character. The art of delineating character by protracted description is one which grows in spite of the critics. In vain is it alleged that the character should be shown dramatically; that it should be illustrated by events; that it should be exhibited in its actions. The truth is, that these homilies are excellent, but incomplete; true, but out of season. There is a utility in unseen portrait, as Lord Stanhope says there is in painted. Goethe used to observe, that in society, in a *tête-à-tête* rather, you often thought of your companion as if he was his portrait: you were silent; you did not care what he said; but you considered him as a picture, as a whole, especially as regards yourself and your relations towards him. You require something of the same kind in literature: *some* description of a man is clearly necessary as an introduction to the story of his life and actions. But more than this is wanted; you require to have the object placed before you as a whole, to have the characteristic traits mentioned, the delicate qualities drawn out, the firm features gently depicted. As the practice which Goethe hints at is, of all others, the most favourable to a just and calm judgment of character, so the literary substitute seems required as a steadying element, as a summary, to bring together and give a unity to our views. We must see the man's face. Without it, we seem to have heard a great deal about the person, but not to have known him; to be aware that he had done a good deal, but to have no settled, inbred, ineradicable notion what manner of man he was who did them. This is the reason why critics like Macaulay, who sneer at the practice when estimating the works of others, yet practise it at great length and with great skill when they come to be historians themselves. The kind of characters whom Macaulay can describe is limited—at least we think so—by the bounds which we indicated just now. There are some men whom he is too impassive to comprehend; but he can always tells us of such as he does comprehend, what they looked like, and what they were.

A great deal of this vividness Macaulay of course owes to his style. Of its effectiveness there can be no doubt; its agreeability no one who has just been reading it is likely to deny.

Yet it has a defect. It is not, as Bishop Butler would have expressed it, such a style as "is suitable to such a being as man, in such a world as the present one." It is too omniscient. Every thing is too plain. All is clear; nothing is doubtful. Instead of probability being, as the great thinker expressed it, "the very guide of life," it has become a rare exception—an uncommon phenomenon. You rarely come across any thing which is not decided; and when you do come across it, you seem to wonder that the positiveness, which has accomplished so much, should have been unwilling to decide any thing. This is hardly the style for history. The data of historical narratives, especially of modern histories, are a heap of confusion. No one can tell where they lie, or where they do not lie; what is in them, or what is not in them. Literature is called the "fragment of fragments;" so little has been written, and so little of that little has been preserved. So is history a vestige of vestiges; few facts leave any trace of themselves, any witness of their occurrence; of fewer still is that witness preserved; a slight track is all any thing leaves, and the confusion of life, the tumult of change sweeps even that away in a moment. It is not possible that these data can be very fertile in certainties. Few people would make any thing of them: a memoir here, a Ms. there—two letters in a magazine—an assertion by a person whose veracity is denied,—these are the sort of evidence out of which a flowing narrative is to be educed—of course, it ought not to be too flowing. "If you please, sir, to tell me what you do *not* know," was the inquiry of a humble pupil addressed to a great man of science. It would have been a relief to the readers of Macaulay if he had shown a little the outside of uncertainties, which there must be—the gradations of doubt, which there ought to be—the singular accumulation of difficulties, which must beset the extraction of a very easy narrative from very confused materials.

This defect in style is, indeed, indicative of a defect in understanding. Mr. Macaulay's mind is eminently gifted, but there is a want of graduation in it. He has a fine eye for probabilities, a clear perception of evidence, a shrewd guess at missing links of fact; but each probability seems to him a certainty, each piece of evidence conclusive, each analogy exact. The heavy Scotch intellect is a little prone to this: one figures it as a heap of formulæ, and if fact *b* is reducible to formula B, that is all which it regards; the mathematical mill grinds with equal energy at flour perfect and imperfect—at matter which is quite certain, and at matter which is only a little probable. But the great cause of this error is, an abstinence from practical action. Life is a school

of probability. In the writings of every man of patient practicality, in the midst of whatever other defects, you will find a careful appreciation of the degrees of likelihood; a steady balancing of them one against another; a disinclination to make things too clear, to overlook the debit side of the account in mere contemplation of the enormousness of the credit. The reason is obvious: action is a business of risk; the real question is the magnitude of that risk. Failure is ever impending; success is ever uncertain; there is always, in the very best affairs, a slight probability of the first, a contingent possibility of the non-occurrence of the second. For practical men, the problem ever is to test the amount of these inevitable probabilities; to make sure that no one increases too far; that by a well-varied choice the number of risks may in itself be a protection—be an insurance to you, as it were, against the capricious result of any one. A man like Macaulay, who stands aloof from life, is not so instructed; he sits secure: nothing happens in his study; he does not care to test probabilities; he loses the detective sensation.

Mr. Macaulay's so-called inaccuracy is likewise a phase of this defect. Considering the enormous advantages which a picturesque style gives to ill-disposed critics; the number of points of investigation which it suggests; the number of assertions it makes, sentence by sentence; the number of ill-disposed critics that there are in the world; considering Mr. Macaulay's position, —set on a hill to be spied at by them,—he can scarcely be thought an inaccurate historian. Considering all things, they have found few certain blunders, hardly any direct mistakes. Every sentence of his style requires minute knowledge; the vivid picture has a hundred details; each of those details must have an evidence, an authority, a proof. A historian like Hume passes easily over a period; his chart is large; if he gets the conspicuous headlands, the large harbours, duly marked, he does not care. Macaulay puts in the depth of each wave, every remarkable rock, every tree on the shore. Nothing gives a critic so great an advantage. It is difficult to do this for a volume; simple for a page. It is easy to select a particular event, and learn all which any one can know about it; examine Macaulay's descriptions, say he is wrong, that X is not buried where he asserts, that a little boy was one year older than he states. But how would the critic manage, if he had to work out all this for a million facts, for a whole period? Few men, we suspect, would be able to make so few errors of simple and provable fact. On the other hand, few men would arouse a sleepy critic by such startling assertion. If he finds a new theory, he states it as a fact. Very likely it really is the most probable theory; at any rate, we know of no

Yet it has a defect. It is not, as Bishop Butler would have expressed it, such a style as "is suitable to such a being as man, in such a world as the present one." It is too omniscient. Every thing is too plain. All is clear; nothing is doubtful. Instead of probability being, as the great thinker expressed it, "the very guide of life," it has become a rare exception—an uncommon phenomenon. You rarely come across any thing which is not decided; and when you do come across it, you seem to wonder that the positiveness, which has accomplished so much, should have been unwilling to decide any thing. This is hardly the style for history. The data of historical narratives, especially of modern histories, are a heap of confusion. No one can tell where they lie, or where they do not lie; what is in them, or what is not in them. Literature is called the "fragment of fragments;" so little has been written, and so little of that little has been preserved. So is history a vestige of vestiges; few facts leave any trace of themselves, any witness of their occurrence; of fewer still is that witness preserved; a slight track is all any thing leaves, and the confusion of life, the tumult of change sweeps even that away in a moment. It is not possible that these data can be very fertile in certainties. Few people would make any thing of them: a memoir here, a Ms. there—two letters in a magazine—an assertion by a person whose veracity is denied,—these are the sort of evidence out of which a flowing narrative is to be educed—of course, it ought not to be too flowing. "If you please, sir, to tell me what you do *not* know," was the inquiry of a humble pupil addressed to a great man of science. It would have been a relief to the readers of Macaulay if he had shown a little the outside of uncertainties, which there must be—the gradations of doubt, which there ought to be—the singular accumulation of difficulties, which must beset the extraction of a very easy narrative from very confused materials.

This defect in style is, indeed, indicative of a defect in understanding. Mr. Macaulay's mind is eminently gifted, but there is a want of graduation in it. He has a fine eye for probabilities, a clear perception of evidence, a shrewd guess at missing links of fact; but each probability seems to him a certainty, each piece of evidence conclusive, each analogy exact. The heavy Scotch intellect is a little prone to this: one figures it as a heap of formulæ, and if fact *b* is reducible to formula B, that is all which it regards; the mathematical mill grinds with equal energy at flour perfect and imperfect—at matter which is quite certain, and at matter which is only a little probable. But the great cause of this error is, an abstinence from practical action. Life is a school

of probability. In the writings of every man of patient practicality, in the midst of whatever other defects, you will find a careful appreciation of the degrees of likelihood; a steady balancing of them one against another; a disinclination to make things too clear, to overlook the debit side of the account in mere contemplation of the enormousness of the credit. The reason is obvious: action is a business of risk; the real question is the magnitude of that risk. Failure is ever impending; success is ever uncertain; there is always, in the very best affairs, a slight probability of the first, a contingent possibility of the non-occurrence of the second. For practical men, the problem ever is to test the amount of these inevitable probabilities; to make sure that no one increases too far; that by a well-varied choice the number of risks may in itself be a protection—be an insurance to you, as it were, against the capricious result of any one. A man like Macaulay, who stands aloof from life, is not so instructed; he sits secure: nothing happens in his study; he does not care to test probabilities; he loses the detective sensation.

Mr. Macaulay's so-called inaccuracy is likewise a phase of this defect. Considering the enormous advantages which a picturesque style gives to ill-disposed critics; the number of points of investigation which it suggests; the number of assertions it makes, sentence by sentence; the number of ill-disposed critics that there are in the world; considering Mr. Macaulay's position, —set on a hill to be spied at by them,—he can scarcely be thought an inaccurate historian. Considering all things, they have found few certain blunders, hardly any direct mistakes. Every sentence of his style requires minute knowledge; the vivid picture has a hundred details; each of those details must have an evidence, an authority, a proof. A historian like Hume passes easily over a period; his chart is large; if he gets the conspicuous headlands, the large harbours, duly marked, he does not care. Macaulay puts in the depth of each wave, every remarkable rock, every tree on the shore. Nothing gives a critic so great an advantage. It is difficult to do this for a volume; simple for a page. It is easy to select a particular event, and learn all which any one can know about it; examine Macaulay's descriptions, say he is wrong, that X is not buried where he asserts, that a little boy was one year older than he states. But how would the critic manage, if he had to work out all this for a million facts, for a whole period? Few men, we suspect, would be able to make so few errors of simple and provable fact. On the other hand, few men would arouse a sleepy critic by such startling assertion. If he finds a new theory, he states it as a fact. Very likely it really is the most probable theory; at any rate, we know of no

case in which his theory is not one among the most plausible. If it had only been so stated, it would have been well received. His view of Marlborough's character, for instance, is a specious one; it has a good deal of evidence, a large amount of real probability, but it has scarcely more. Marlborough *may* have been as bad as is said, but we can hardly be *sure* of it at this time.

Macaulay's "party-spirit" is another consequence of his positiveness. When he inclines to a side, he inclines to it too much. His opinions are a shade too strong; his predilections some degrees at least too warm. William is too perfect, James too imperfect. The Whigs are a trifle like angels; the Tories like, let us say, "our inferiors." Yet this is evidently an honest party-spirit. It does not lurk in the corners of sentences, it is not insinuated without being alleged; it does not, like the unfairness of Hume, secrete itself so subtly in the turns of the words, that when you turn to prove it, it is gone. On the contrary, it rushes into broad day. William is loaded with panegyric; James is always spoken evil of. Hume's is the artful pleading of a hired advocate; Macaulay's the bold eulogy of a sincere friend. As far as effect goes, this is wrong. The very earnestness of the affection leads to a reaction; we are tired of having William called the "just;" we cannot believe so many pages; "all that" can scarcely be correct. As we said before, if the historian's preference for persons and party had been duly tempered and mitigated, if the probably good were only said to be probably good, if the rather bad were only alleged to be rather bad, the reader would have been convinced, and the historian escaped the savage censure of envious critics.

The one thing which detracts from the pleasure of reading these volumes, is the doubt whether they should have been written. Should not these great powers be reserved for great periods? Is this abounding, picturesque style, suited for continuous history? Are small men to be so largely described? Should not admirable delineation be kept for admirable people? We think so. You do not want Raphael to paint sign-posts, or Palladio to build dirt-pies. Much of history is necessarily of little value,—the superficies of circumstance, the scum of events. It is very well to have it described, indeed you must have it described; the chain must be kept complete; the narrative of a country's fortunes will not allow of breaks or gaps. Yet all things need not be done equally well. The life of a great painter is short. Even the industry of Macaulay will not complete this history. It is a pity to spend such powers on such events. It would have been better to have some new volumes of essays solely on great men and great things. The diffuseness of the style would have been then in place; we could have borne to hear the

smallest minutiæ of magnificent epochs. If an inferior hand had executed the connecting-links, our notions would have acquired an insensible perspective; the best works of the great artist, the best themes, would have stood out from the canvas. They are now confused by the equal brilliancy of the adjacent inferiorities.

Much more might be said on this narrative. As it will be read for very many years, it will employ the critics for many years. It would be unkind to make all the best observations. Something, as Mr. Disraeli said in a budget-speech, something should be left for "future statements of this nature." There will be an opportunity. Whatsoever those who come after may find to say against this book, it will be, and remain, the "Pictorial History of England."

Art. V.—CONVERSATION AND POETRY OF ROGERS.

Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers. London, Edward Moxon, 1856.

The Poetical Works of Samuel Rogers. London, Edward Moxon, 1853.

There has been much talk of a consolidation of the statutes; when shall we have a consolidation of Whig anecdotes? A Holland-House Joe Miller, bringing up all the dinner-talk of that party to the present date, is greatly needed. Such a work, forming a general body of reference, from which moreover it should be as fatal to quote as from the old body of English wit comprised in the original of that name, would constitute at once a valuable repertory of amusement and a much-needed barrier against boredom. At present Whig wit is in much the same state as English common law, it must be gathered from a mass of independent reports; and the novelty and parentage of a joke is as laborious a thing to ascertain as the truth and authority of a position in law. Let the thing be done thoroughly and once for all; let us have the remaining two volumes of Mr. Moore's diary; print two more, if it is absolutely necessary; publish all his invitations to dinner, with copies of the answers; put in his butcher's bill; furnish more full details about Bessy's accouchements; ransack the drawers of every Whig nobleman and distinguished literary character of liberal principles; exhaust the memory of all dowager duchesses and diners-out; invite all the filial spirits who

think justice has never been done by an ungrateful world to the hero of the family to say all they have to say; let there be nothing left that can possibly be printed;—and then let some industrious man, not naturally given to despondency, collate the authorities; or appoint a commission, if you will, and let the puns and the personal reminiscences remain in abeyance while its members meet. Only let Lord John be excluded, or he will infallibly insist on all being published *in extenso*, and add notes explanatory of the jokes.

Holland House has not been happy in its reporters: we have had brilliant general descriptions of the host, the hostess, and the guests, and enthusiastic generalising on the uniform feast of reason and flow of soul which prevailed; but of all this nothing has survived but a few personal anecdotes and a great deal of indifferent wit. In fact, though the beginning of this century was rich in conversational talent, the kind of conversation was not that which will bear reporting. A ready and well-stored memory, and a quick and lively wit, were the essentials of success, and so perhaps they should be in general conversation; but then, general conversation ought to be allowed to expire with the occasion. Small gossip about individuals, interesting and amusing while the subjects are fresh and present to the minds of all the hearers, become the worst of annoyances when coldly inflicted in print on a new generation.

The only table-talk really worth preserving is that which reflects an individual mind of capacity and originality enough to let fall, even in its lighter moments, matter pregnant with thought and observation. Some men, like Selden and Johnson, survive mainly in the records of their conversation. And sometimes, as in the case of Coleridge, the sayings thus rescued from oblivion are not only of the highest value in themselves, but are a sort of key to the mind of the speaker and corrective and interpretive of his written works.

The present work is not of this class. It would more properly have been entitled Table-*Silence* of Samuel Rogers; for in it is recorded, not what Samuel Rogers thought and said, but what Samuel Rogers had heard other people say. From a man whose taste and connoisseurship were so eminent, readers will be apt to expect some nicety of criticism in painting and poetry. They must be content to suffer disappointment. A few casual expressions of likings and dislikings, a few minute cavillings and trite remarks, make up the sum of Mr. Rogers's conversation on this subject. Such as they are, they are almost the only original thing in the work; and what is said on Pope may be quoted as the most favourable example of them:

"In Pope's noble lines *To the Earl of Oxford, prefixed to Parnell's*

Poems, there is an impropriety which was forced upon the poet by the rhyme;

> 'The Muse attends thee to thy silent shade:
> * * * * * *
> She waits, *or to the scaffold or the cell*,
> When the last lingering friend has bid farewell.'

It should be, of course, 'or to the cell or the scaffold.'

Pope has sometimes a beautiful line rhyming to a very indifferent one. For instance, in the *Epistle to Jervas*,

> 'Alas, how little from the grave we claim!
> Thou but preserv'st a face, and I a name:'

the latter line is very good: in the former, 'claim' is forced and bad; it should have been 'save' or 'preserve.' Again, in the *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*,

> 'A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
> 'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be,'

the former line is touching, the latter bad.

What a charming line is that in *The Rape of the Lock!*

> 'If to her share some female errors fall,
> *Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.*'

These verses in his *Imitation of the Second Epistle of the Second Book of Horace* (verses which Lord Holland is so fond of hearing me repeat) are as good as any in Horace himself;

> 'Years following years, steal something every day,
> At last they steal us from ourselves away;
> In one our frolics, one amusements end,
> In one a mistress drops, in one a friend.'

But perhaps the best line Pope ever wrote is in his *Imitation of the First Satire of the Second Book of Horace;*

> 'Bare the mean heart that lurks beneath a star.'

The want of pauses is the main blemish in Pope's versification: I can't recollect at this moment any pause he has, except that in his fine *Prologue to Cato;*

> '*The triumph ceas'd;* tears gush'd from every eye;
> The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by.'

People are now so fond of *the obscure* in poetry, that they can perceive no *deep thinking* in that darling man Pope, because he always expresses himself with such admirable clearness.

My father used to recommend Pope's *Homer* to me: but, with all my love of Pope, I never could like it."

It by no means follows, that because a man has no power to criticise he has no faculty of enjoyment, or even great accuracy and delicacy in the perception of beauty and skill in art. But to have a taste so good as Mr. Rogers's undoubtedly was in the main, and a critical judgment of this calibre, indicates that he

was not much in the habit of bringing his thoughts to bear on his intuitions.

Anecdotes and characteristic sayings of the men by whom Rogers was surrounded are what we next look for, when we find there is nothing characteristic of the man's own mode of thinking except that negative trait itself. We are not surprised that there should be very few of these. Men do not easily conceive that the conversation and demeanour of those with whom they live on the same level and in daily intercourse can be worth noting and remembering. Besides, Mr. Rogers was a little of a virtuoso as well as a man of taste, and little bits of out-of-the-way personal information and gossip had more charm for him, and left a more permanent impression on him, than the conversation of Lamb, and Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and Mackintosh.

Characteristic traits of great men, however minute, are always worth preserving. We gratefully receive—we only too eagerly grasp at—the smallest incidents or sayings which can help us to give greater vividness or truth to the figure existing in the imagination. But then the recorded traits must have something characteristic about them; it is sufficient to have one or two of a class; selected without discrimination, and reiterated without mercy, they are perhaps more trying to the temper than any other reading. That Fox had not been able to read Mickle's *Lusiad* through; that he thought Robertson's *Columbus* pleasingly written; how Lord Holland looked at breakfast; what Tierney thought of Burke's eloquence; whether Sheridan had 200*l.* sent him by the Prince; whether more than 200*l.*; whether it might not have been 200*l.* with an intimation that there was more if he wished for it; whether it might not be an annuity;—these and such like petty details and trivial discussions are trying enough: but when the persons themselves are as little important as the incidents are significant, then a reader resigns. We would at any time rather read the Supplement to the *Times* than much of Mr. Rogers's *Table-Talk*. What on earth do we care about Hoppner's "awful temper?" or how can any man conscientiously ask us to pay for the printing of this sort of thing?—

"Lord Holland and Lord Lansdowne having expressed a wish to be introduced to Cumberland, I invited all the three to dine with me. It happened, however, that the two lords paid little or no attention to Cumberland (though he said several very good things),—scarcely speaking to him the whole time: something had occurred in the House which occupied all their thoughts; and they retired to a window, and discussed it."

We have never been able ourselves to find much satisfaction in seeing a person who has simply seen another. That

degree of approximation to the king which consists in your brother having seen the Duke of York is generally deemed unsatisfactory, and only becoming in an Irishman to boast of. From Mr. Rogers we learn that—

"Sir George Beaumont, when a young man, was introduced at Rome to an old painter, who in his youth had known an old painter, who had seen Claude and Gaspar Poussin riding out, in a morning, on mules, and furnished with palettes, &c., to make sketches in the Campagna."

Throw in another handful or two of old painters, you might see Zeuxis; exchange them for gardeners, and you may get a vicarious view of Adam himself. This process is like constructing an opaque telescope to see an invisible object; or like travelling to York by conversation with the coachman who drives the first stage out of London.

"If the favour," says the editor of the last English *Table-Talk* that deserved to be printed,—"if the favour shown to several modern instances of works nominally of the same description as the present were alone to be considered, it might seem that the old maxim, that nothing ought to be said of the dead but what is good, is in a fair way of being dilated into an understanding that every thing is good that has been said by the dead." The present editor appears to be very much of this opinion; and when we learn that the present is a selection from a large mass of memoranda of Mr. Rogers's conversation, we have no difficulty in believing a fact we learn from the preface, that he "sometimes had the mortification of finding impatient listeners." Yet it would be unjust to deny that this memorial of his sayings contains some curious and characteristic anecdotes, and one or two good sayings. Gray's notion about keeping a dog is new, we think; it throws a ray both on the coldness and the cautiousness of his nature:

"At Brighton, during my youth, I became acquainted with a lawyer who had known Gray. He said that Gray's pronunciation was very affected, *e. g.* 'What *naise* (noise) is that?'

Henley (the translator of Beckford's *Vathek*) was one morning paying a visit to Gray, when a dog came into the room. 'Is that your dog?' said Henley. 'No,' replied Gray: 'do you suppose that *I* would keep an animal *by which I might possibly lose my life?*'"

We will omit Mr. Rogers's criticism on Gray, and only cite the following, which gives a lively picture of Wordsworth pouncing upon his own property as it were; for whether Gray took it from Oldham or not, the phrase and idea are both so eminently Wordsworthian, that we are not surprised at his feeling as if he had been robbed of them:

"I once read Gray's *Ode to Adversity* to Wordsworth; and at the line,—

'And leave us leisure to be good,'—

Wordsworth exclaimed, 'I am quite sure *that* is not original; Gray could not have hit upon it.'"

Part of the book is occupied with scattered reminiscences of old social habits; but generally either vague or trivial. Thus, Rogers remembers the time when every gentleman's family had only one large cotton umbrella. He has seen ladies and gentlemen walking on the pier at Calais with small fox-muffs; and he has heard thus much of Vauxhall and Ranelagh:

"By the by, General Fitzpatrick remembered the time when St. James's Street used to be crowded with the carriages of the ladies and gentlemen who were walking in the Mall,—the ladies with their heads in full dress, and the gentlemen carrying their hats under their arms. The proprietors of Ranelagh and Vauxhall used to send decoy-ducks among them, that is, persons attired in the height of fashion, who every now and then would exclaim in a very audible tone, 'What charming weather for Ranelagh' or 'for Vauxhall!'

Ranelagh was a very pleasing place of amusement. There persons of inferior rank mingled with the highest nobility of Britain. All was so orderly and still, that you could hear the *whishing* sound of the ladies' trains, as the immense assembly walked round and round the room. If you chose, you might have tea, which was served up in the neatest equipage possible. The price of admission was half-a-crown. People generally went to Ranelagh between nine and ten o'clock."

This is a lively and startling picture of the indiscriminating severity of our criminal code at no very distant period:

"When I was a lad, I recollect seeing a whole cartful of young girls, in dresses of various colours, on their way to be executed at Tyburn. They had all been condemned, on one indictment, for having been concerned in (that is, perhaps, for having been spectators of) the burning of some houses during Lord George Gordon's riots. It was quite horrible.—Greville was present at one of the trials consequent on those riots, and heard several boys sentenced, to their own excessive amazement, to be hanged. 'Never,' said Greville with great *naïveté*, 'did I see boys *cry so*.'"

Mr. Rogers evidently had little or no power of observing men; his great opportunities were wasted on him; he is always occupied with little isolated facts *about* men. In his life, in his poetry, in his conversation, he is always the same; he is curious in the husks of things; he was provided with plenty of nuts through life, and he spent it in cracking them, dilating upon and preserving the shells, instead of eating and digesting the kernels. Coleridge and he are the two opposite poles of mental

constitution. "I can take no interest whatever," says Coleridge, "in hearing or saying any thing merely as a fact—merely as having happened. It must refer to something within me before I can regard it with any curiosity or care. My mind is always energic—I don't mean energetic; I require in every thing what I may call *propriety*—that is, a reason why the thing is at all, and why it is *there* or *then* rather than elsewhere or at another time." You cannot depend even on the facts preserved by such a mind as that of Rogers; not because they are not exactly observed and recorded—they will probably be both; but because such a mind has nothing to guide its selection, and you have no security that the evidence is to the purpose. All that is of the pith of the matter in hand may have been lost, and only the accidental or even exceptional incident connected with it preserved. The observations on persons of a man who has no insight into character, or pleasure in the study of it, are of as little value as the observations of a man unskilled in science on the natural history of an unexplored country. Men of this sort are better fitted for the intercourse of society than those who think they possess nothing till they have made it a part of themselves. The former give and take knowledge, such as it is; anecdote and wit are reflected quickly from them: they give sparks of their own in the collision of society. Such a man can say what he has to say in those interstices which a dinner admits of, whereas the other requires the world to sit round listening while he expounds his convictions and limits his theories; but the latter gathers water like a well, filtered and stored up, while the former runs away like a brook sparkling and bubbling over the stones, and after fifty years of familiar intercourse with the best society in England leaves the contents of such a volume as this as the fruits of his experience.

Of course Rogers talked in society better than he is here represented as doing. You cannot reproduce in this way the conversation of such a man; not that Rogers was a conversationalist, but he had vigour and quickness of mind enough to hold his own in general intercourse; he was industrious in collecting and agreeable in imparting all the little *ana* of the day; he was sensible, rich, and well informed, and he could say caustic things of his acquaintance, which always makes a man agreeable among mutual friends. He was a kind-hearted man, but he was bilious and thin-skinned; he was not without a real enjoyment of excellence, but his taste on the whole was more of that negative kind which shows itself in a sensitiveness to any breach in the harmony and propriety it loves. Mr. Rogers carried this very far. He said that to hear the modern pronunciation, 'balcŏny' for 'balcōny,' made him sick. A susceptibility of this sort is

apt to result in a critical and cavilling temper, which, when it exercises itself on friends, is always amusing, but not always amiable. Byron wrote a very savage personal satire on his friend. It is too bad to be quoted entire; but some lines give what we apprehend is, if an overdrawn, still a characteristic picture of the tone Rogers's conversation was apt to assume:

"Hear his tone (which is to talking
That which creeping is to walking),
Now on all-fours, now on tiptoe;
Hear the tales he lends his lip to,—
Little hints of heavy scandals;
Every friend in turn he handles;
All which women or which men do
Glides forth in an innuendo;
Clothed in odds-and-ends of humour,
From devices down to dresses,
Women's frailties, man's excesses;
All which life presents of evil
Makes for him a constant revel."

Medwin has a story of Byron's putting this satire, of whose abusive bitterness the above lines give no idea, under the cushion of the sofa when Rogers came to see him at Pisa, and seating him on it, while talking in the most friendly way to him. The story is not an improbable one; it is in character with Byron's mischievous spirit: a gentleman could not have done it; but Byron was only an outside gentleman, and ungenerous and vulgar in his heart's core. In the notes to the present work (generally better worth reading than the text) are two amusing anecdotes of Byron:

"A lady resident in Aberdeen told me that she used to sit in a pew of St. Paul's Chapel in that town, next to Mrs. Byron's; and that one Sunday she observed the poet (then about seven or eight years old) amusing himself by disturbing his mother's devotions: he every now and then gently pricked with a pin the large round arms of Mrs. Byron, which were covered with white kid gloves.

At the house of the Rev. W. Harness I remember hearing Moore remark, that he thought the natural bent of Byron's genius was to satirical and burlesque poetry: on which Mr. Harness related what follows. When Byron was at Harrow, he, one day, seeing a young acquaintance at a short distance who was a violent admirer of Buonaparte, roared out this extemporaneous couplet,—

'Bold *Robert Speer* [Robespierre] was *Bony's* bad precursor;
Bob was a bloody dog, but *Bonapart's a worser*.'"

Rogers, we fancy, was not very much at ease among the poets and men of genius. They were too much in earnest for him. He loved the easy polished tone of well-bred society; he preferred talk to discussion; and Luttrell's brilliant flashes, or Bobus Smith's quotations, had more charms for him than Wordsworth's

serious disquisitions, Lamb's stuttering wit, or Byron's arrogant and clever assertions. They put him out, too, in little things; and how strong an impression such things made on him we see by the hold they retained on his memory. Once Sheridan was talking at Rogers's house "in his very best style," [every thing going off as well as possible] "when, to my great vexation, Moore (who has that sort of restlessness which never allows him to be happy where he is) interrupted Sheridan, by exclaiming, 'Isn't it time to go to Lydia White's?'" Rogers went abroad with Mackintosh; but they did not hit it off together. At Lausanne Mackintosh wouldn't care to borrow the *Decline and Fall*, and read the concluding passages on the very spot where they were written; and at Geneva he did not scruple to appropriate Rogers's carpet-bag, and fill it with newly-purchased books. You can fancy the distracted man in the midst of his shirts and toothbrushes, and Mackintosh waiting for him in the carriage below, quietly reading, with the bag on the opposite seat. Uvedale Price once called forth all his ingenuity to get him out of the house; and Coleridge would sit all day after breakfast talking matter of which neither he nor Wordsworth could understand a word. Still worse were the metaphysicians:

"When I lived in the Temple, Mackintosh and Richard Sharp used to come to my chambers, and stay there for hours, talking metaphysics. One day they were so intent on their 'first cause,' 'spirit,' and 'matter,' that they were unconscious of my having left them, paid a visit, and returned! I was a little angry at this, and, to show my indifference about them, I sat down and wrote letters, without taking any notice of them."

When on one occasion he asked Sharp a metaphysical question, Sharp politely told him he was not one of the only two men with whom he talked metaphysics. "It so offended my sister," says Rogers, "that she said I ought immediately to have ordered a post-chaise and left him there." He went with Byron to the Pitti Palace at Florence; but his rude and callous friend sat down in a corner; "and when," says Rogers, "I called out to him, 'What a noble Andrea del Sarto!' the only answer I received was his muttering a passage from the *Vicar of Wakefield*,—'Upon being asked how he had been taught the art of a *cognoscente* so very suddenly, he assured me that nothing was more easy. The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules; the one, always to observe, the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains, and the other to praise the works of Pietro Perugino.'" Byron and Rogers were two spirits not very well calculated for amicable intercourse, and their friendship seems to have consisted in quarrels over-night,

and reconciliations in the morning. Indeed, Byron was a man with whom it was almost impossible for any one to continue long in harmony. Shelley, with his sweetness and true nobleness, his firm will and high courage, was the only one of his associates to whom Byron bowed; and even that superiority was one he never acknowledged even to his own heart. That he often indemnified himself for the secret feeling by rude taunts, and a tone half-jesting, half-insulting (as in a scene Mr. Rogers was witness to), we can well believe. Such things fell off from Shelley's quiet dignity without touching him; he never descended into the arena of Byron's personal squabbling:

"One day, during dinner, at Pisa, when Shelley and Trelawney were with us, Byron chose to run down Shakespeare (for whom he, like Sheridan, either had, or pretended to have, little admiration). I said nothing. But Shelley immediately took up the defence of the great poet, and conducted it in his usual meek yet resolute manner, unmoved by the rude things with which Byron interrupted him,—'Oh, that's very well *for an atheist*,' &c."

Mr. Rogers's stock of *facetiæ* appears to have been an indifferent selection, with few claims to novelty; nor was he himself very successful in this line, if we may judge from the only specimen preserved in these memoranda.

Mr. Rogers's own *bon-mot*:

"A man who attempts to read all the new publications must often do as a flea does—*skip*."

An epigram by Erskine, which Mr. Rogers thought "far from bad:"

"The French have taste in all they do,
Which we are quite without;
For Nature, that to them gave *goût*,
To us gave only gout."

Instance of wit in Mr. Canning:

"I once mentioned to Canning the anecdote, that, while Gray was at Peter House, Cambridge, some young men of the college having learned that he had a fire-escape in his rooms, alarmed him in the middle of the night by a cry of 'fire!'—and that presently Gray descended from the window by a ladder of ropes, and tumbled into a tub of water, which the rogues had placed there;—upon which, Canning added, that 'they had made a mistake in calling out 'fire,' when they meant to cry 'water.'"

It is not very easy for an editor to know what good sayings are old and what new; but there are things here which any court would take judicial cognisance of as matters of universal notoriety, and many others which have only just appeared in contemporaneous publications. At any rate, quasi-witty things, faded

epigrams, fickle anomalous pleasantries, and defunct repartees, ought not to be disinterred. It is like relighting a half-smoked cigar. A humorous thing, on the contrary, is never old. There is a venerable story (we feel grateful to Mr. Moore for reviving it) of a man who came vexed with losses out of a gaming-room, and finding another at the top of the stairs tying his shoe, kicked him down the whole flight, saying, "Damn you, you're *always* tying your shoe!" You cannot exhaust that sort of thing; the oftener you hear it the better you appreciate it; you laugh when you think of it to yourself. So it is with most of Sydney Smith's sayings: they enjoy perpetual youth;* no one need be afraid of telling them over and over again. Mr. Rogers has a right to tell the story about his own dining-room:

"At one time, when I gave a dinner, I used to have candles placed all round the dining-room, and high up, in order to show off the pictures. I asked Smith how he liked that plan. 'Not at all,' he replied; 'above, there is a blaze of light, and below, nothing but darkness and gnashing of teeth.'

When his physician advised him to 'take a walk upon an empty stomach,' Smith asked, 'Upon whose?'

He said that '*his* idea of heaven was eating *foie gras* to the sound of trumpets.'"

There is an exquisite incongruity in this last idea; the mode employed of raising an earthly enjoyment into the heavenly category is amazingly felicitous and absurd.

We will do Mr. Canning the justice to quote a better saying of his than the last. It is in the present collection of *Table-Talk* and elsewhere:

"A lady having put to Canning the silly question, 'Why have they made the spaces in the iron gate at Spring Gardens so narrow?' he replied, 'Oh, ma'am, because such very fat people used to go through' (a reply concerning which Tom Moore said, that 'the person who does not relish it can have no perception of real wit')."

It is not wit at all, really. It is the humorous mock plausibility of the idea that gives it its charm—the making the spaces in the *gate* narrow because fat people used to go through the *gateway*; this, and the quiet assumption of the necessity of excluding very fat people from the park, make it a most happy saying.

The account of the king's consternation at being asked how he was is amusing enough, and within the limits of Mr. Rogers's own experience. It may serve to conclude our extracts:

* *Sydney Smith's Life*, by his daughter, deserves to be noted as an exception to the flagrant voluminousness of modern biographies. The first volume contains a life-like picture within just limits of a man whose portraiture was well worth preserving.

"Once, when in company with William the Fourth, I quite forgot that it is against all etiquette to ask a sovereign about his health; and, on his saying to me, 'Mr. Rogers, I hope you are well,' I replied, 'Very well, I thank your majesty: *I trust that your majesty is quite well also.*' Never was a king in greater confusion; he didn't know where to look, and stammered out, 'Yes,—yes,—only a little rheumatism.'"

"I regret," says Mr. Rogers, "that Moore should have printed those memoranda which prove how painfully Sheridan elaborated his compositions; for though the judicious few will feel that Sheridan was quite right in doing so, the public generally will think the less of him for it." That this principle of only telling so much of a man as will make the public think well of him is a false one few will be inclined to deny. Still, we cannot think there is any moral obligation to bring a man before the public at all, when it involves the necessity of exhibiting him in so poor an aspect.

Perhaps the present editor thought it a *suppressio veri* to leave Mr. Rogers the reputation of a clever man and a good talker. If the report here furnished be at all a just one, never was any one more conclusively stripped of all claim to more than average mental ability.

The reputation which Mr. Rogers first gained as the author of the *Pleasures of Memory* was well deserved. It was (putting Cowper aside as exceptional) incomparably the best poem which had for many years been produced in the existing school of the eighteenth century.

Byron was in the habit of building a poetical triangle, and placing Rogers at the head of it (except Scott). This was partly irony and absurdity, and partly a legitimate consequence of his maxim, that greater honour was due to the more methodical and exact versification of Pope's school than to the freedom of his own contemporaries. At one time he calls him "the Nestor of poets," "our poetical papa," &c., and says he and Crabbe were the fathers of the modern school, which is a totally false idea: his true ground for admiration, however (if he really felt it), is to be found in another expression, "He is the last of the *best* school," that is, the last of the old school. And this is exactly Rogers's position. His poems are the last bright flicker of an expiring flame. To understand the attention they excited, we must call to mind what the condition of that school then was. Never since the first fulness of its tide had the art of poetry ebbed so low in England. It had been falling steadily for a hundred years.

Wordsworth made a fierce and just onslaught on the techni-

cal diction he found holding sway over English poetry. But this tyranny of restricted expression and ideas was not the cause, but the consequence, of the absence of great poets; when these appeared, they broke without an effort through its flimsy and tasteless canons. When any subject lays a strong hold on the imagination of a man of creative instincts, he strives to give it an outward embodiment, and if verse is the form he chooses, or is compelled to, he is a poet; but there is all the difference in the world between the necessity to express what verse alone can adequately give voice to, and the desire to write verses suggesting a search for something to say in verse. The latter desire will produce poems too; but they are different from those written by the first-described class of poets not in quality so much as in kind. Such verses, though of a high class, are all Pope's poems, except perhaps the *Dunciad;* and, in fact, from the death of Dryden to near the end of the eighteenth century, it is scarcely possible to name a man who wrote poetry because necessity was laid upon him so to write. At the same time, verse was in request; and in the absence of powerful imaginations, a technical system of versification and expression grew up. It is always so. In all cases, in art as well as in religion, where the life-giving spirit grows faint, the form gains a factitious importance. It is at once more sharply defined and more zealously insisted on. Of course it is not said that all poets can be strictly divided into these two classes; but they lean to one or the other. Perhaps all poets are at some times verse-makers; though the reverse is not true. Certainly, throughout the eighteenth century verse-making predominated largely over imaginative poetry. The exceptions are partial. Goldsmith wore his chains with so easy a grace, that you scarcely perceive them. Thomson was an imaginative poet, but had barely power to free himself, and did not shake the system. Gray, too, was a poet within a narrow sphere, but of that order to whom a strict slavery of form is an advantage; to him stays were an assistance in walking. Collins and Chatterton glimmered through the twilight. Burns first walked free; but, apart from the greatness of his genius, he was pretty much out of the range of the trammels in his Scotch poems. Fortunately, he did *not* take Mr. Mackenzie's advice to model himself on Mrs. John Hunter. Cowper was of the verse-making class; he is generally looked on as first to lead the way to genuineness and freedom. If he was so, it was not wittingly. No man ever wrote more directly for the sake of making verses than Cowper, or more sedulously clipped and fashioned his lines, though not always by the approved standard; but he had an inborn simplicity and truthfulness of nature which reflected itself in all

he wrote. He had no great impulse to say any thing; but he could not deal in vague commonplaces, or say other than what he had really felt and thought. He wrote simply, not because he saw the vices of the established mode, but because his moral instincts would not let him do otherwise. But close upon his heels came a race too large for the yoke, and too strong to endure it. Wordsworth found that his delicate intuitions could not gain utterance at all in those established generalities which had so long served the necessities of more commonplace genius. He was the first clearly to perceive the mischief, and openly to denounce it. He did not build up a true theory of expression, but he did much to destroy a false one. Coleridge, in his early poems, still struggles half-bound in the old fetters; but he was not long in shaking himself loose. That Southey, in the security of his own self-estimate, should acknowledge none but self-imposed restrictions in art, is not strange. Sudden and far flashed the new dayspring. But when Rogers was writing the *Pleasures of Memory*, these and those other equal and lesser names, so soon to "flame in the forehead of the morning sky," lay clustered below the horizon. It was the darkness of the hour before dawn, with only a faint gleam or two, a stray heralding of day, glimmering here and there in the east. Things poetical were at their worst.

We may dispute, if we will, the claim of Pope and Johnson to be great poets in the highest sense; but it is impossible to deny that they were great minds: there was vigour and capacity in all they wrote, and the general fashion of their time demanded sense, and thoughts at least, if not thought, from an author. But a later time was forced to content itself with the feeble sweetness of Shenstone, the flatulent pomposity of Mason, the vapid flow of Hayley, and all the artificial sentiment and flat expression that is to be found in Dodsley and elsewhere. Long after the prophets of a new life had made their voices heard, the race of minor poetasters pursued the old and beaten pathways. There was a wretched affectation of tenderness of sentiment and simplicity of taste. Maudlin elegies, tributes to friendship, lugubrious ballads, and staggering paralytic odes, were the fashion. Wishy-washy matter was expressed in a cold and confined phraseology. Unless some genius had broken the charm, not only the phraseology, but, as a necessary consequence, the ideas adapted to verse would have become fixed and limited. Already a number of artificial proprieties had established themselves. Whoever came to your door,—whether a pedlar, or a vagrant, or a tourist,—you could call him but one thing—he was a "pilgrim." The patriot was a favourite person in those days, and was always found ploughing when most

wanted; if we may believe what we read, every county in England was infested with hermits; if you went into a neighbouring wood, you might be pretty sure to find a disconsolate man there with one arm round an urn, who would seize you by the button, and in thirty or forty monotonous stanzas tell the tragical results of his daughter's attachment. It would be difficult to find a father in the poetry of that day who was not "hoary." Blessings abounded, and there was a run on moral deathbeds. Faithful dogs then had their day; and on the graves of dogs and men alike flourished urns and epitaphs and inscriptions. Grottoes, cells, and cots, were the usual habitations of authors in verse; and their food, though not accurately defined, appears to have been strictly vegetable. Sensibility was the proper thing,—the poet liked to call himself "pensive;" a hero (who was always either a youth or a swain) was fitted out with a tear in either eye, and heroines were reservoirs with difficulty restrained from overflow. A foolish affectation of rusticity, and praise of a certain stock poetic country-life, was a very common feature. And extending through, and giving its deadening tone to all minor features, there was an absence of all particularity, a habit of dealing with vague generalities, instead of seizing the individual aspects of things. No poet looked at life and nature for himself, and said what he found there simply and truly; few looked on them at all, for the received commonplaces were to be had with less trouble; nothing was real except an occasional gleam of personal feeling.

Mr. Rogers's own poem, the *Epistle to a Friend*, though not without beauties of its own, affords a striking example of the artificial formulæ in which it was then fashionable to invest your ideas. That poem, he tells us, was designed "to illustrate the virtue of true taste, and to show how little she requires to secure not only the comforts, but even the elegancies of life." For this purpose he avails himself of a part of his own habits and experience; but instead of giving them in their truth and reality, he deems it incumbent on him to put them in a certain poetical frame: we must get at something like what Pope, or Boileau, or Horace, have written. And first, a serious poetical epistle must necessarily come from the country. Why, we now find it hard to conceive. Why should Mr. Rogers go out of his way to swear by the country mouse, when living after the town one? Why, when happily at home amongst his friends, with metropolitan comforts about him, should he find it necessary to represent himself as a "village friend," occupying a "hermit cell" in a remote part of the country, and talk as if "selected shelves," engravings, a "thatched bath," a dumb waiter, and looking out of window, were the certain and sole conditions of true happiness

and self-respect? Why talk of an easy round in the best London society as

> "the joyless glare, the maddening strife,
> And all the dull impertinence of life"?

It makes one suspect the Whig dinners were not so amusing as we are taught to believe; but it fails to convince us that Mr. Rogers really found (as he intimates) a permanent source of enjoyment in dining or supping alone on apples and pears. And why is a supper called a "cheerful rite" and a "frugal banquet;" and why, because Horace speaks of *dapes inemptas*, should Mr. Rogers describe any of his meals as "pure and unbought?" At the very best they could only be "pure and unpaid for,"—no advantage to so rich a poet. Why, again, should Mr. Rogers, in those chirping little verses we learned in our childhood, wish for a cot beside a hill? How unhappy he would have been there! Why describe himself as united in the bonds of holy matrimony to a woman in a russet gown and blue apron? He may have expressed to Lady Jersey, as he tells us he once did, "with great sincerity," his regret at being unmarried; but can he ever in his wildest dreams have contemplated such a union as that without abhorrence?

The lines *On a Tear* do not by any means afford a fair specimen of Mr. Rogers's powers; but they give some idea of the sort of things he wrote when most under the dominion of the taste of his earlier days.

> "Oh, that the chemist's magic art
> Could crystallise this sacred treasure!
> Long should it glitter near my heart,
> A secret source of pensive pleasure.
>
> The little brilliant, ere it fell,
> Its lustre caught from Chloe's eye;
> Then, trembling, left its coral cell—
> The spring of sensibility!
>
> Sweet drop of pure and pearly light!
> In thee the rays of virtue shine;
> More calmly clear, more mildly bright,
> Than any gem that gilds the mine.
>
> Benign restorer of the soul!
> Who ever fly'st to bring relief,
> When first we feel the rude control
> Of love or pity, joy or grief.
>
> The sage's and the poet's theme,
> In every clime, in every age,—
> Thou charm'st in fancy's idle dream,
> In reason's philosophic page.

That very law* which moulds a tear,
And bids it trickle from its source,—
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
And guides the planets in their course."

Though not always on so low a level, Mr. Rogers continued during the whole course of his long poetical career to breathe the atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Men are slow to learn of their youngers; and Mr. Rogers was not one whose temper and frame of mind were likely to render him an exception. But it is a striking evidence of the genuineness of his taste, and his power of appreciating and enjoying true excellence, that he was quick to recognise the merit of those new men whom he was so little able to emulate. He said of Wordsworth, "He deserves all his fame." And this was something for him to say. That his sympathy should have proved capable of extension to yet another race, and almost another school, is too much to expect. Such as it was, it always outwent his creative power. *Jacqueline*, an attempt to move in the free air of Walter Scott and Byron, is graceful, polished, and more easy than its author generally has the power to be; but it is mere embroidery-work, thin and finikin. In the *Columbus*, Mr. Rogers snatches at laurels far far out of his reach, and beats his flagging wings in all the suffering of fruitless effort—"fluttering in vast agony," like Peter Wilkins' rebel glumm general cut through the graundee by a sabre-stroke. In these poems, however, and even in the *Italy*, Mr. Rogers is true to old associations. He never really rises above the principles and practice of his art as they were received when he began to write. In fact, his was a genius to which they were specially suited; and he gave a higher perfection than any other living man was capable of doing to certain restricted conditions of form and diction. His was just the nature not to aim at a higher beauty, but to occupy itself in giving as much finish as possible to that which was at hand. He had no grasping and searching love of beauty. His was not a mind of that order which can enjoy great things in spite of defects; which not being blind to them, can yet bear with them. By a fastidious man, we mean one whose irritation at the presence of defects *habitually* outweighs his pleasure in beauty or excellence. Perhaps Rogers as artist was not quite a fastidious man, but he was one to value the lesser thing without blemishes above the greater thing with. He would have preferred looking on a clear-burning wax-candle to gazing on the sun with a consciousness of its spots. In the *Pleasures of Memory* he wrote a poem in which the prevailing versification was polished up to its

* "The law of gravitation."

highest pitch, whose language was without blemish according to the taste of the day—terse, harmonious, and well selected; he treated his subject pleasingly, if tritely, and disclosed affectionate feeling without false sentimentality. It is not to be wondered at that he was applauded and sought after. He fairly earned his first reputation. But that this reputation should survive in the blaze of genius which so soon after burst forth, is a fact more to be wondered at. Yet it is not difficult to perceive the reasons for it. Between himself and the new race there were few common points for comparison. They were of a higher order altogether. His claims did not practically come into collision with theirs. Had he been more on their level, his title would not have passed so unquestioned as it did. He did not render himself obnoxious to the shafts of party; and he was in habits of familiar social intercourse with so wide a range of literary men, that scarcely one could be found to whom it would not have seemed some breach of civility to criticise him openly and justly. At that time personal considerations limited the range and dictated the tone of public criticism more powerfully than they even now do. The tone of attack was more direct, and was resented as a personal injury. If you were a bumptious warm-blooded little man, like Moore, or thought it a fine thing and incumbent on you as a gentleman, like Byron, you called out the reviewer, or said you would do so on your return to England. If your talent lay in a different line, you quarrelled with him, and made up as spiteful an epigram as you could, or otherwise took your revenge. But, owing to the above causes, Rogers escaped with a rub or two. He had many sincere adherents, and others granted his reputation as a matter of courtesy. Moreover he was much besides being a poet; and the man of taste and fashion, and the Mæcenas to whom the literary world owed much, carried off the man of letters.

At the present day, it can scarcely be denied that the rank which Rogers still nominally holds among English poets is mainly due to his not being read. His poems, associated with Stothard and Turner, lie on the table, and occur to young people who wish to make presents to one another. The book keeps the poetry alive; but the readers are pretty nearly an extinct race. With the exception of a few stragglers, Mr. Rogers survived the genuine admirers of his writings. To have disturbed the sensitive old man in his latter days by hostile criticism would have been cruel; and the world, as by one consent, respected the claims of age and a reputation sanctioned by its association in all memories with some of the foremost names in English literature: but now it can be neither unjust nor unseemly to attempt to estimate his genius, and to assign him his place in the

English commonwealth of letters. A far different judgment must await him in such a comparison than when he is weighed against those who occupied the stage when he first appeared on it.

A likeness might be imagined between each of our poets and some one of the constituent elements of landscape. Shakespeare would be the all-reflecting, all-embracing sea, unfathomable and ever fresh; Shelley the mountain-top, crowned with blue ether; Wordsworth the dewy pastures, commons, and serene wide-spreading plains; Byron a heady torrent, gleaming and swift, often foaming and chafing over stones; Milton a mighty solitary oak; Walter Scott a free-growing forest, waving its branches in inspiring morning air; Moore the restless fluttering singing-bird; Crabbe his own village; and Coleridge a gorgeous sunset, where the clouds take a glory, and over level ridges, and through rents and chasms, shines from impenetrable depths beyond a calm undazzling fire. In such a scheme Rogers would be aptly represented by one of those would-be rustic ultra-artificial pleasure-grounds, on the elaboration of which some of our forefathers bestowed so much thought and labour; or, to give him narrower limits, he is the very image of one of the grottoes in such a place, such a one as he himself describes:

> "Till o'er the mead a cool sequestered grot,
> From its rich roof a sparry lustre shot;
> A crystal water crossed the pebbled floor,
> And on the front these simple lines it bore,
> 'Hence away, nor dare intrude,' &c."

Wonderfully simple lines, which we need not quote; but "sparry lustre" very happily describes the main characteristics of Rogers's poetry. Yet there is no false glitter about him, he has no purple patches: every thing is in perfect keeping. This is his highest claim to admiration, and, combined with the evenness and nicety of his versification, constitutes his great charm. His system of ornamentation is elaborate, but all is smoothed down into exquisite harmony of tone. To read him is like entering a perfectly well-furnished drawing-room,—there is an air of luxury and easy-chairs about him. Or you may compare it to rolling along a smooth road in a well-hung chariot, with a knowledge that the whole turn-out is unexceptionable: it is not that you pass through a particularly delightful country, or that the pace is exciting; it is partly the absence of all jar, but more the pleasurable self-identification with so finished an equipage.

Rogers prided himself on the pains he took, and very justly. No other man ever made so much of so small a poetical capital. "I was engaged on the *Pleasures of Memory* for nine years, on *Human Life* for nearly the same space of time, and *Italy* was not

completed in less than sixteen years." His genius was active, and his taste exacting. He wrote, he himself tells us, at the rate of four lines a day. His was not the exuberant fancy and wild luxuriance of language, which require the pruning of matured judgment and the cooler survey of a distant eye. His works did not lie by nine years to be thus judged: they were nine years in the crucible, having every phrase retraced and retouched, each epithet set in the best light, each foot in the line hammered over and weighed in the balance, and every paragraph taken to pieces and put together again. It was a painstaking process to make the most of a little. The gardeners talk of very "dressy grounds:" the *Pleasures of Memory* is a very "dressy" poem.

One inevitable consequence of all this pinching and pruning and transplanting is, that the connection between parts is obscured, the natural connecting-links broken; the sense is difficult to follow, and the poem assumes the form of ill-jointed fragments. A miscroscopic anxiety about details is not often combined with the power of commanding the larger proportions of a whole. "This little animal," says Mr. Rogers of the bee, "from the extreme convexity of her eye, cannot see many inches before her." Hence, while his verses flow with a wonderful smoothness and sweetness, and within certain limits a most agreeable variety of cadence, his meaning is by no means so quickly followed. The natural sympathy which, in all true poetry, obtains between the flow of the thought and the flow of the verse, and makes the two mutual interpreters one of the other, has been lost by frequent patching. The sense goes to the wall in these never-ceasing amendments. The assiduous self-criticiser has dwelt on the sentences so long, that a mere glance tells him the meaning they were appointed to convey; and he does not perceive that in the course of so many petty alterations it has become a good deal obscured to his readers. So often is this the case, that we defy any one to read Rogers's poetry correctly "at sight." The joints in the mosaic will infallibly trip him up. His defective composition arises often from an undiscriminating use of the parenthesis, and of the present participle in an absolute sense; but to analyse it would take us too far out of the way. Often it seems to have been arranged expressly to provide pitfalls for the reader. Almost any casual extract will serve to show that Mr. Rogers is not remarkable for lucidity of construction:

> "On that ancient seat,
> The seat of stone that runs along the wall,
> South of the church, east of the belfry-tower
> (Thou canst not miss it), in the sultry time
> Would Dante sit conversing, and with those
> Who little thought that in his hand he held
> The balance, and assigned at his good pleasure

To each his place in the invisible world,—
To some an upper region, some a lower;
Many a transgressor sent to his account,
Long ere in Florence numbered with the dead;
The body still as full of life and stir
At home, abroad; still and as oft inclined
To eat, drink, sleep; still clad as others were,
And at noon-day, where men were wont to meet,
Met as continually; when the soul went,
Relinquished to a demon, and by him
(So says the bard, and who can read and doubt?)
Dwelt in and governed."

Again:

"And let us from the top of Fiesole,
Whence Galileo's glass by night observed
The phases of the moon, look round below
On Arno's vale, where the dove-coloured steer
Is ploughing up and down among the vines,
While many a careless note is sung aloud,
Filling the air with sweetness—and on thee,
Beautiful Florence, all within thy walls,
Thy groves and gardens, pinnacles and towers,
Drawn to our feet."

The ease of the reader, we are told, is secured by the labour of the writer. Mr. Rogers (except as far as his versification goes) is not an instance of this. Goldsmith seems to have served to some extent as his model in the *Pleasures of Memory*, as Gray and Milton (from whom he often borrows lines) undoubtedly did for the *Ode to Superstition*. Rogers was flattered when D'Este called him a child of Goldsmith; but those who are curious to note the contrast between easy natural painting and constrained, hampered, artificial enamel-work may read the *Deserted Village* and the *Pleasures of Memory* together.

Again, Rogers is neither a correct nor a precise writer. Few men have taken more liberties with the English language, or have been more easily content to pen a well-sounding phrase, without asking whether it represents a definite idea or carries a poetic impression that can be grasped by the imagination. Such an assertion may be thought to require proof. It is not difficult to find it. Begin at the beginning. Take the two first lines of the *Pleasures of Memory*: they bear evidence that he was not giving expression to a distinct imaginative conception existing in his own mind, but was putting words together:

"Twilight's soft dews steal o'er the village green,
With magic tints to harmonise the scene."

Now any poet might have said, and many have said, the dews steal *down* on to the green or elsewhere; but Rogers's object is to mend the language and say something a little new and per-

fectly well-sounding, so he says the dews steal *o'er* the green, *i.e. across* the green; and this, we venture to say, is what no man ever would say who really wished to convey a true impression of the mode in which the falling dew makes itself perceived. The next line speaks for itself. It is sheer words. Perhaps he once had present to his mind the variations of shadow, and the softening influence of growing obscurity as twilight deepens. Possibly in some former draft that idea was expressed; but now he raises utterly incongruous ideas by the words "magic tints," and attributes the effects to the dews. Go a little further—

> "As jars the hinge, what sullen echoes call!
> O haste, unfold the hospitable hall!
> That hall where once, in antiquated state,
> *The chair of justice held the grave debate.*"

Can one *unfold* a hall? But granting that one may, is there any sense in which a chair of justice (whatever its antiquated state) can hold a grave debate? Either the words are used in their metaphorical sense of conducting a debate, in which they are not applicable to a chair, or else the chair must hold two parties, for with less it cannot embrace a debate. Did the squire and the poacher use to sit there together? That some nearly analogous expression once had a meaning is very likely; but we cannot find it here; and the more earnestly we look for it, the more it eludes us.

Take another instance from the first page and a half:

> "Ye household deities! whose guardian eye

(the rhyme requires they should have but one among them)

> Marked each pure thought, ere registered on high,
> Still, still ye walk the consecrated ground,
> *And breathe the soul of Inspiration round.*"

He means they fill the chambers with inspiration. He might very fairly have said they breathe it round, though there still remains an inherent awkwardness in the idea of exhaling inspiration round a room; he might even have said they breathe the very essence or spirit of it round: but strain the metaphor a little further, call it soul instead of essence, and do all in your power to personify inspiration by the aid of a capital I, and you have a ludicrous image: one set of persons going about exhaling the soul of another person. The man of decorative taste is pleased with the refined heightening of tone; a sensitive imagination would have shrunk instinctively from the outraged metaphor. In the same way, we have often heard of darkness shrouding, or of the shroud of darkness covering a thing; but

Mr. Rogers oversteps a limit which a real poet would have felt, when he says—

"Grim darkness furls his leaden shroud."

This is one of those fine things to which it is not easy to attach an idea. In one of the notes to the *Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers* there is the following story, connected with a very similar outburst in Campbell. Mr. Rogers says, "His *Pleasures of Hope* is no great favourite with me." On which the editor remarks in a note:

"And it was much less so with Wordsworth, who criticised it to me nearly *verbatim* as follows; nor could his criticism, I apprehend, be easily refuted. 'Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope* has been strangely overrated: its fine words and sounding lines please the generality of readers, who never stop to ask themselves the meaning of a passage. The lines,

"Where Andes, giant of the western star,
With meteor-standard to the winds unfurl'd,
Looks from his throne of clouds o'er half the world,"

are sheer nonsense,—nothing more than a poetical indigestion. What has a giant to do with a star? What is a meteor-standard?—but it is useless to inquire what such stuff means. Once, at my house, Professor Wilson having spoken of those lines with great admiration, a very sensible and accomplished lady who happened to be present begged him to explain to her their meaning. He was extremely indignant; and, taking down the *Pleasures of Hope* from a shelf, read the lines aloud, and declared that they were splendid. 'Well, sir,' said the lady, '*but what do they mean?*' Dashing the book on the floor, he exclaimed in his broad Scottish accent, 'I'll be *daumed* if I can tell!'"

One simile in Mr. Rogers's *Epistle to a Friend* has puzzled many readers, we should think:

"Lo, here, attendant on the shadowy hour,
The closet-supper served by hands unseen,
Sheds, like an evening star, its ray serene
To hail our coming."

Now turn a closet-supper how you will, it is very hard to make any thing like an evening star of it; and what possible comestible can hail its approaching devourers with a ray serene? Intensely rural as Mr. Rogers is, he would hardly set a dish of glowworms before his friend from town. But there is a note,—let us refer to that. Ah, our old friend the Latin quotation, who is a sort of Morrison's universal pill in literature, enabling us to digest any thing on which he can be brought to bear, however remotely:

"— aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædes,
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris."

But who on earth could have supposed that a "closet-supper" meant the golden image of a youth with a candle in his hand?

Instances of the incorrect use of language are not uncommon:

> "The illustrious line that in long order *led*
> Of these that loved him living, mourned him dead."

By *led* is meant *advanced.*

The poet says that at breakfast the *Times* "unfolds," meaning that some one goes through the painful task of unfolding it. He speaks of vessels going "athwart" the ocean; and uses "inly gliding" in the sense of gliding into, &c.

Such criticism is descending to minutiæ; but it is worth while in the present case, because perhaps no author ever spent more pains in heightening and perfecting his productions than Rogers, and he thus becomes the best instance of how impossible it is for mediocrity of intellect and imagination to ascend out of its natural sphere by grasping at the forms of expression which are natural to higher genius. You cannot supply the want of imagination by any, however dexterous, a disposition over a lay figure of the garments in which the former naturally clothes itself. Imagination has a strange transfusing power over language, it moulds it almost as the passions do the countenance; it compels it to *utterance;* while cold correctness, aiming at the result alone, falls into the very errors it conceives itself most secure against.

Is there, then, no such thing as an art of expression? Certainly there is, and one which every man who wishes to write should study deeply. But there is no *art of writing* apart from *expression.* Young men are told to form themselves on the "style" of Addison, or Burnet, or Pope, or Chillingworth. Before following this advice, they would do well to consider whether they wish to say the same things. Let them rather examine how great men expressed what they had to express; let them study and feel how their words convey their thoughts. Let them master *language;* and then, when they have any thing to say, they will be able to say it with force and exactness, and the style will be their own. They must learn to utter themselves, not to handle the utterance of others.

Rogers's two best poems appear to us to be the *Human Life* and the *Italy.* True, the latter is little more than a poetical guide-book, and has no claim to be considered a substantive poem; but some of the fragments are not without beauty; they have a greater simplicity and directness than his other poems, bear less trace of effort, and recommend themselves by a certain airy elegance in their descriptions and narrations. The simplicity is that of art, not of nature; but there is an entire absence of affectation. Mr. Rogers is always commonplace; but he is rarely feeble, and never maudlin,—defects we are apt to associate with a

high degree of refinement. But he is not weak; on the contrary, there is self-reliance, and a sort of stiff elasticity of nature shows itself. He has common, though very common sense, and writes verse as if he might be a good man of business.

The *Human Life* has many of the faults which belong to his early school. It is, moreover, a very incongruous whole. The life of man is described by tracing the career of an individual made up of Cincinnatus, Lord Russell, Epaminondas, and Mr. Fox; and who is represented, now at his plough, now in the senate, now breakfasting comfortably under "fragrant clouds of mocha and souchong," with his newspaper and all modern appliances, now rushing out with helmet and sword on a sudden cry of "to arms!" and dyeing a neighbouring stream with blood. But some of the detached pictures of life are full of graceful drawing, and forbid us to deny Mr. Rogers the claims of affectionate and tender, though not deep or passionate feeling. And he has this high claim to respect, that he is *genuine*, and never affects or strains after a deeper vein of sentiment than is natural to him. We have quoted him often for his defects, let us quote him once for his beauties:

> "Nor many moons o'er hill and valley rise
> Ere to the gate with nymph-like step she flies,
> And their first-born holds forth, their darling boy,
> With smiles how sweet, how full of love and joy,
> To meet him coming; theirs through every year
> Pure transports, such as each to each endear!
> And laughing eyes and laughing voices fill
> Their home with gladness. She, when all are still,
> Comes and undraws the curtain as they lie,
> In sleep how beautiful! He, when the sky
> Gleams, and the wood sends up its harmony,
> When, gathering round his bed, they climb to share
> His kisses, and with gentle violence there
> Break in upon a dream not half so fair,
> Up to the hill-top leads their little feet;
> Or by the forest-lodge, perchance to meet
> The stag-herd on its march, perchance to hear
> The otter rustling in the sedgy mere;
> Or to the echo near the abbot's tree,
> That gave him back his words of pleasantry—
> When the house stood, no merrier man than he!
> And, as they wander with a keen delight,
> If but a leveret catch their quicker sight
> Down a green alley, or a squirrel then
> Climb the gnarled oak, and look and climb again,—
> If but a moth flit by, an acorn fall,
> He turns their thoughts to Him who made them all;
> These with unequal footsteps following fast,
> These clinging by his cloak, unwilling to be last."

That Rogers has a charm of his own no one can deny. Yet it is not easy to define it. You seem to have it on the surface of

his poetry, and to lose it the moment you go deeper. It is the mark left by his peculiar power, which lay in a very uncommon refinement, perhaps a very rarely equalled refinement of taste and a keen exquisite sense of fitness: he had a wonderful control over all that belongs to words, except their meanings, and a marvellous art of arranging them so as to please both eye and ear, the former especially. Form is always uppermost with him, and the more so the more it is external; the traces of his power are found more in his verse and his diction than in his subject or his thoughts; and we have, as in his own Etruscan vases, wonderful grace and proportion of shape given to the commonest material. Utter poverty of thought is apparent in every page. A great poet pours wine into crystal vessels, Rogers occupies himself in staining them tastefully to hold toast-and-water. As we read him, we may stretch a point to say with Pope's father, "These be good verses;" but never can we say, "This is good poetry."

Art. VI.—THE ENGLISH STAGE.

Catalogue of Dramatic Pieces, the property of the Members of the Dramatic Authors' Society or their representatives, made up to the 1st of February 1856.

Arthur Murphy (as we learn from a passage of the lately-published *Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers*) used to say there were four estates in England—King, Lords, Commons, and the Theatres. Nobody nowadays, except an actor, would think of classing the theatres among our estates at all. *Our* fourth estate is the newspaper-press. The poor theatres have no such addition of honour, either literary or social. It is much if—in books at least, and by the fashionable mind—they are still allowed a place among public amusements. They are jostled out of credit even with humbler pleasure-seekers, by crystal palaces, scientific lectures, panoramas, ascents of Mont Blanc, polytechnic halls, free libraries, concerts, oratorios, museums, and the opera. Nobody nowadays reads plays: few care to talk of seeing them. The critic's row no longer frowns tremendous with the Æacuses, Minoses, and Rhadamanthuses of the pit. The trunkmaker's knock is heard no more in the shilling-gallery. No wits gather in Strand taverns or Covent-Garden coffee-houses to decide, potent as a Vehm-gericht, the fate of play or actor. The public has abandoned even the privilege of damnation: Le théâtre est mort! And yet—"Vive le théâtre!"

Some sixteen licensed play-houses still nightly open their doors to the world of London, from courtly St. James's to squalid Shoreditch and remotest Islington. Some ten or twelve hundred hard-working people—actors, singers, dancers, scene-painters, musicians, costumiers, machinists, property-men, scene-shifters, "supers," and all that indescribable tagrag and bobtail which hangs on to the skirts of theatrical enterprise—still gain hard-earned bread by holding the mirror up to nature, or by lackering, framing, cleaning, and repairing the said mirror. The *List of Pieces belonging to Members of the Dramatic Authors' Society or their representatives, up to February* 1856, now lying before us, shows some twelve hundred tragedies, comedies, dramas, melodramas, farces, interludes, burlettas, extravaganzas, burlesques, spectacles, or pantomimes. There are writers for the stage who still make a livelihood by the craft. Not a Theatrical-Fund dinner but can still secure the indispensable Lord of British charity to fill its chair. The daily newspapers continue to find room in their columns for accounts of the last new piece, and some Sunday prints contrive to fill whole broadsides with the most marvellous minutiæ of even provincial theatrical intelligence—whence the reader may gather with pleasure that "Little Joe Eccles has been doing good business at Stoke-Damerel," and that "Slogger and his dogs are drawing immensely at Corbridge;" or grow sad to learn that "Thorne's troupe has been but indifferently patronised at Sowerby-Bridge; which is the more to be lamented, as Thorne has invariably provided a good class of legitimate entertainment, and the company comprises many old-established favourites." If we pass from the sovereign people to the sovereign—the Queen has her series of winter performances in the Rubens-room at Windsor; while scarce a week passes but we learn that "her Majesty has honoured with her presence" the Olympic, the Princess's, or the Haymarket. Noble and rich follow the royal example. Who has not heard of the private theatricals of Woburn and Belvoir? And in hundreds of English country-houses—stately or snug, warm old Tudor or bran-new Elizabethan—if you could lift the roof, Asmodeus fashion, and peep in on the amusements of the winter, ten to one but you would find the best room in the house fitted with a proscenium, the ladies'-maids at work on costumes, Cumberland's *Acting Drama* littering the library tables,—in short, all signs of "a play toward" among the young people.

In truth, the stage is like the king—it never dies. It never can die, while there lives in men the impulse to embody emotion and incident in mimetic forms—the craving to project ourselves out of our daily life and habitual surroundings into new forms,

strange utterances, unfamiliar relations, passions stronger than society tolerates, and mirthfulness less marred by melancholy than real life supplies. All children are actors. Watch them in their little plays. The very word "play" has its significance, common, as it is, to the actor and the child. Childhood is one long drama, full of marvellous incident. It matters little whether its stage be a Spitalfields court or a ducal nursery. The scenery, machinery, and decorations in both are created by the glamour of that glorious imagination as yet undimmed by life and unchastened by experience, which can find Pactolus in a street-gutter, and make of the foulest cellar a very palace of delight.

The complaint that the drama is dead comes chiefly from old gentlemen, who remember the Kembles, and the O. P. riots; and literary men, who are *au fait* at the Elizabethan repertory, but who never enter the theatre in the next street. But the drama is as alive as ever for those cherry-cheeked boys, and fair-haired little maidens, whose bright faces light up the Christmas box, and whose merry laughter sounds like a ring of silver bells through the hoarser full-grown mirth of pit and gallery. The drama is as alive as ever for the hard-handed artisan and his neat wife, who, from their bench at Sadler's Wells, follow breathless the jealousy of Othello, or roar at the self-conceit of Bottom. Nor is the drama dead for even that *blasé* public of Oxford Street which trembles with the *tremolo* that ushers in the ghost of the Corsican brother, or scarce suppresses its shriek at the discovery of Mrs. Charles Kean hanging on to the door of the murder-vault in *Pauline*. Nor is the drama dead for the selecter audiences which chuckle over the unctuous humour of Keeley, or the inimitable homely realism of his better-half, or which follow Mr. Wigan through the unforced scenes of *Still Waters run deep*, or sit, like Garrick, between laughter and terror, to witness the farcical grimace, vehement passion, mad energy, and bewildering contrasts of Robson in the Yellow Dwarf or Prince Richcraft; nor for the coarser crowd which roars with Wright through a "screaming farce" at the Adelphi, or is convulsed by the quaint oddities of Buckstone at the Haymarket.

No; be assured the drama is quite alive. We who write about it have not to anatomise a "dead subject," but to examine the gait, features, movements, speech, and behaviour of a living body; a more difficult task, indeed, but a pleasanter one, than the dissector's. But, though it does not die, the drama is subject to metempsychosis. It takes as many forms as that hero of transmigration, Endor, so dear to our nursery-days:—an uncouth and clumsy bantling, swaddled in a monk's frock, before the reign of Elizabeth;—at the beginning of that

reign a pedantic doctor, talking Latin, or latinised and scholastic English, in a master-of-arts' gown;—by the end of that reign a young giant, sounding all mysteries of humanity, pouring forth with irrepressible fertility the most various and life-like creations; sounding the strings of the human heart, from its sharpest tones of pathos to its gladdest note of merriment; pressing into its service the most productive imaginations, the keenest wits, the sweetest voices of the time;—under James and Charles I. dwindling from the colossal dimensions of its prime, but still large of mould, and stately or sweet of utterance; during the Commonwealth a tattered cavalier, skulking from the puritan constables;—between the Restoration and the Revolution a debauched court-gallant, with a brave French suit on its back, cards and claret-flask in hand, chucking orange-girls under the chin, and exchanging smutty and reckless repartee with loose ladies in masks, in the Mall, or from the side-boxes;—under Anne and the earlier Georges alternately a periwigged fop, or a dull prosy university-doctor, declaiming in toga, breeches, and full-bottomed wig;—through the Regency a rattling, sharping, sparkling "blood," with some wit and more slang, or else a mouther of clap-trap, a maudlin Wertherised retailer of German sentiment;—and in our time a motley masquerader, assuming in turn, and more or less weakly, all the shapes of its earlier transmigrations, but incapable, as yet, of moulding for itself a distinct and characteristic form.

It is not the purpose of this article to examine in detail the features of our national drama in each of these its leading phases. Our sketch is meant merely to support the observation, that the art of the stage is eminently an art of conditions, shaped by the pressure of the time. Because it has ceased to manifest its life in the form we like best, we must not conclude it is dead. Even the iron hand of Cromwell could do no more than suppress it. The moment his gripe was taken off, it sprang up more buoyant, if less beautiful, than before.

The most discouraging point about the stage of our own day is, that it seems as yet to have found no form of its own. We say "seems," for it may be that we are unable to measure aright the peculiarities of contemporary art. Critics of the next generation, judging ours in retrospect, and with all its relations under their eye, may discover, even in the stage-life of our degenerate day, something which distinguishes it from all the earlier forms of dramatic activity. They may prove its irregular and seemingly aimless strugglings to have been the pangs of birth, and not the twitchings of the dead-throe. At any rate, our stage, even for us, is worthy of more study than it has yet received. There has been abundant lamentation over it,—enough, and

more than enough, of depreciatory comparison between it and the stage of other times—Elizabethan, Carolan, or Georgian. But none, or very few, have thought it deserving of positive appreciation.

Our object in this article is to attempt such an appreciation. Dramatic art, we have said, is eminently an art of conditions. Its development demands a combination of minds such as no other art requires. Author, manager, actor, and public, must all work together to make a play. It is hard to say which of these four has the more important function in the matter. For some sixteen theatres—confining ourselves to the capital—this work of writing, managing, acting, and seeing plays is going on. Some of these theatres trust chiefly to the great plays of the past. Shakespeare defrays the bulk of the entertainment at the Princess's and Sadler's Wells. The transpontine Surrey and Victoria, and the east-end theatres and saloons, live mainly on melodrama. Farce and burlesque, dear to the English heart, find room in all the theatres alike. Comedy is the staple ware of the Olympic and the Haymarket. The Adelphi has its melodrama—more artistic and elaborate than suits the audiences of the Surrey or Victoria; and its farce—more "screaming" than the Haymarket or the Olympic. But none of these theatres can strictly be said to have a class of entertainments peculiar to itself. Each of them, upon occasion, ventures on the others' domain. None of our theatrical stars are fixed. They move in wide and eccentric orbits. Shoreditch has its fits of legitimate tragedy; the Britannia Saloon, the City, and Standard, low as their prices of admission are, can find means to pay Mr. Anderson, or Mr. G. V. Brooke, his fifty pounds a-week; the Surrey has its opera-seasons; Mr. Charles Mathews is not too nice to divide the honours of Drury Lane with Madame La Barrère and her wild-beasts.

One result of this variety of entertainment is, that such actors as we have are scattered through many theatres, and that no one house possesses a complete and well-trained troupe for any one particular class of plays, and a combination of all the resources required for the perfect representation of any such class.

But one remark applies to all these theatres;—they live mainly on translations from the French. For comedy, farce, and melodrama alike, our playwrights lay Paris under contribution. There is but a pennyworth of English invention to an intolerable quantity of Gallic importation. The cheap and rapid intercommunication between London and Paris, the very general ability to read French with more or less aid from the dictionary, and the obvious advantages of borrowing or stealing over inventing, have led to an extension of this practice, which, however,

is of much earlier date than most persons are aware. From the Augustan days of Anne downwards, our play-writers have drawn largely on France; and a great proportion of what elderly play-goers fondly call "good old English farces" are translations from the French.

And yet our time can boast its original writers. To say nothing of smaller men, whose place is as yet hardly fixed, the generation which has seen produced plays of Miss Baillie, Byron, Sheil, Barry Cornwall, Milman, Miss Mitford, Knowles, Bulwer, Jerrold, White, Marston, and Browning, has something to show. It is enough for the present to say of these writers, that they have produced works which, whether regarded as plays or as poems, are superior to any thing presented on the stage, of the serious kind, since the Restoration—Otway's *Venice Preserved* alone excepted. In comedy we cannot say as much. Jerrold may have as much wit of words as Congreve, or Vanbrugh, or Sheridan; but he lacks their dramatic movement, buoyant spirits, and knowledge of the world as their world was.

But in spite of these and other less conspicuous exceptions, it must be admitted that our stage is of the French, Frenchy. There is a sad lack of nationality about it. Its pictures of life, such as they are, are thinly-disguised scenes, which may have likelihood in Paris, but are ludicrously unlike any thing in England. The morals are as un-English as the manners. The mainspring of French stage-intrigue, serious or comic, is infidelity to the marriage-vow. Our decencies of life forbid resort to this source of interest. But the interest our playwrights must have; and it is very amusing to see the shifts to which the translators and adapters of our theatres are put to preserve the effect, and yet varnish over the corrupt cause into something less repugnant to British propriety. But the scent of corruption still clings to the scene; and no healthiness of moral tone is possible in our theatre while the prurient poison of the modern French stage is transfused through all its veins.

But, with these evils, we have derived from the French theatre many good lessons. The modern French dramatists are, beyond question, the first who have reduced to system the secret of stage-effect. If, instead of adapting their plays, our writers had contented themselves with studying in them the art of developing a plot in and through action, the secret of conducting a story so as to keep alive the interest of an audience, and to raise it higher and higher to a culminating point, we should have owed nothing but gratitude to France. Even in translations and adaptations, however, this constructive art of the French is manifested for the education of original dramatists to come; and all who even now write original pieces show in their works the influence of French

principles of construction. Our actors, too, have derived useful influences from France.

The natural conduct of the story of a play goes far to induce naturalness in the actors. Compare an English comedy of the modern French school with one of the school of Colman, Reynolds, or Morton, to go no further back: it will be found that the coarsely-coloured and over-emphatic style of acting at once engendered by and encouraging the exaggeration of our legitimate English comedy would be impossible, however bad the actor, with the work of the disciple of Scribe or Bayard.

But this sobering and naturalising influence of the French stage upon our own is confined to comedy. In what is called "drama," France finds us in pieces, but remains without influence upon our actors. In farce,—inasmuch as our borrowers depart from all probabilities of English life in their "conveyance" from the French,—the modern actor is led daily more and more away from the study of the living originals about him.

But before dealing separately with the circumstances of author, manager, actor, and public, in our own day, we must refer briefly to the number of theatres in London at different dates.

About the time that Shakespeare began to write for the stage, the population of London was not much above one-twentieth of its present numbers; yet it could maintain not fewer than eleven theatres. It is true, the largest of them were in all probability smaller than the least of our present houses, except the little box in the Strand; and that some were open only at certain seasons of the year. Rather more than a century later, Colley Cibber considered two theatres more than the town could find actors to occupy, or theatrical taste to support with profit. The period to which the ex-patentee always refers (in his apology) as the golden age of the drama, within his long experience, was when Drury Lane (under the first triumvirate of Cibber, Wilks, and Dogget, and the second triumvirate, of Cibber, Wilks, and Booth,) was the only licensed theatre for dramatic performances in London; the Haymarket being confined to opera, and the house in Lincoln's Inn Fields then existing only in the plans of Rich, the ejected patentee of Drury Lane: and yet Cibber lived in the high and palmy days of the theatre. He had seen Hart and Mohun act, the former Shakespeare's grandnephew, and both contemporaries of actors who might have seen Shakespeare play the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. He himself became an actor in 1690. He might have been clapped on the shoulders, as a raw young aspirant, by Dryden. He won his greatest successes under the eyes of Congreve and Vanbrugh; and he survived to sneer at the rising fame of Garrick. He is the link between the stage of the Re-

storation and the theatre of our great-grandfathers. During his long life he had watched the prime and decay of Betterton, and had seen the best of such actors as Mountford, Nokes, Leigh, Powel, Dogget, Wilks, Booth, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, and Mrs. Oldfield. These actors he thought insufficient to man two theatres; and yet we scatter the strength, or diffuse the weakness of our theatrical army through no fewer than sixteen playhouses!

We can, however, infer little as to the popularity of the stage from the mere number of theatres open in London at any one time. We may infer more as to the quality of actors and plays. It is certain that there must be a public reputed to be hungry, when so many dramatic ordinaries spread their tables. But it does not follow that all the caterers find customers; if they do, it is past dispute that the appetites of the guests must be more sharp-set than discriminating.

In Shakespeare's time, it would seem that all classes were greedy for stage-plays. Besides the regular playhouses, we know that inn-yards were turned into theatres; and Henslowe's *Diary* affords evidence,—commencing a few years before Shakespeare's earliest-known appearance as a dramatic author,—how omnivorous was the appetite, and how rapid the digestion of London play-goers towards the close of the sixteenth and at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the theatres with which Henslowe was connected,—and he was a sort of manager, or principal capitalist and ready-money man for several companies,—a new play seems to have been produced on an average every eighteen days; and these, be it remembered, were not the skeleton dramas or slight farces of our time, but substantial pieces in five acts, such as we may still read in the printed editions of Marlowe or Ford, Massinger or Middleton, or Dodsley's less-known collection of old plays.

Critics, in comparing our stage with that of Henslowe's days, are apt to forget what an enormous mass of the plays of that time has disappeared altogether. Enough, however, have survived the trunk-makers, the tailors'-measure-makers, and Mr. Warburton's cook, to enable us to judge the authors of that time pretty fairly. But we must be on our guard against measuring the quality of Shakespeare's immediate predecessors, his contemporaries, and followers, by such standards as Marlowe for the first, Ben Jonson for the second, Massinger, or Beaumont and Fletcher for the last. These are the choice ears of the teeming harvest of the Elizabethan theatre. In the case of the rest, the straw and chaff are out of all proportion to the grain; and yet, making all due abatement for the accumulation of bombast, buffoonery, and long-windedness, which has happily perished, we

must acknowledge that there never was a time,—since Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides shook the scene of Athens,—in which so many powerful and accomplished minds were uttering themselves through dramatic forms, as in the sixty years between the first appearance of Marlowe as a dramatist in 1587, and the passing of the act for the suppression of stage-plays and interludes in 1647.

And yet the stage was during all those years denounced from the most popular pulpits. Actors were dealt with as the especial children of Satan, not in sermons only, but in petitions of town-councils, decrees of university heads, and in the minds and mouths of decent citizens generally. Most of the dramatic authors of that time were actors. There was no great wealth to be earned at the work. 5*l.* seems to have been a high price for a play in 1589, though 20*l.* was not considered excessive in 1613. It is true that, besides receiving the price of his play, the author-actor was often a sharer in the receipts which a successful piece brought to the box of the company;—and in those days all companies were managed on the sharing system. Nor was there at that time any literary fame or profit to be looked for from plays, distinct from what followed their success in the theatre. The comparatively few plays which were printed in that century, as a general rule, found their way to the press long after their run was over upon the boards. Others were printed by some piratical rogue, who took them down in shorthand from the actors' mouths, with a view of making a market of them to some other troupe.

As there were many companies of actors, it was the object of each to keep the "books"* purchased on their account for their own exclusive profit; and, in one case, we learn from Henslowe's *Diary* that forty shillings was actually paid to the printer not to print a play, of which he had procured the manuscript, while the right of representation belonged to one of Henslowe's companies. There is every reason to believe, that had the printing of his plays depended upon Shakespeare himself, we should have had as few of them preserved as we have of the two hundred and thirty pieces which honest Thomas Heywood claimed to have written, or helped to write.

We have gone thus at length into the details of the Elizabethan theatre, because they will serve us in estimating our own; and because most of the facts we have mentioned seem to lie out of the knowledge, or to escape the consideration, of most of those

* The word "book" is always used of a play by Henslowe, Alleyn, and others connected with theatres who have left dramatic records of the sixteenth century. The word is still used in the theatres. The prompter is always said "to hold the book," though, in nineteen cases out of twenty, he holds only some stitched sheets of manuscript.

who are in the habit of comparing the theatre of the nineteenth with that of the sixteenth century.

In most of the points to which they seem generally to attribute the degeneracy of the modern stage—such as the want of social recognition for actors, the eagerness of the mob for mere amusement, the low remuneration of writers for the stage, the absence among them of literary ambition, and the lack among managers of all appreciation of literary merit—we cannot but think that the theatre of Elizabeth and James I. was, on the whole, more unfavourably placed than our own.

And yet, compare the one with the other in respect of the works by which each may claim to be remembered. The secret of the difference lies deeper than the relations of author and actor to each other and to the public; it is to be sought for in the bearings of the time upon author, actor, and public alike. In the days of good Queen Bess and her successor, the dramatic art was dealing, for the first time, with human life in a youthful, living, and untrammelled spirit. Hence the theatre had irresistible attractions for the most apprehensive and sympathetic minds; for no other mode then existed of so presenting life through fiction. There was no burden of stage-conventions to be got rid of; no hampering rules of stage-usage or stage-treatment to be observed; no rival exigencies of the musician's, scene-painter's, or machinist's art to be consulted. Actors had not then grown into a power altogether subordinating authors, nor authors into a literary class, aiming at fine writing or the expression of deep thought more than at the exhibition of human character and passion through action. Above all, there was then an unspoiled, unsentimental, unhackneyed, and unsophisticated public to please, which judged in a kindred spirit to that in which the author wrote and the actor played,—a public neither nice about probabilities, nor scrupulous about proprieties, nor delicate as to the means employed to stir its pulses, move its tears, or excite its laughter; but insisting on being stirred, moved, or made merry. And for the harvest of excitement, passion, or mirth, there lay the broad field of life—not yet broken up—before the hardy and buoyant tiller of that virgin soil.

We have said, that towards the consummation of the dramatic art author, manager, actor, and public must co-operate. We should have said, that they can co-operate only as their times will permit. The results of their joint labour will probably be mainly determined by circumstances over which, individually or collectively, they can have but little control. But, in so far as they can contribute to any results, it is not easy to say which has the most important part.

Following the obvious order of influences, it would seem

that the author should come first, as he makes the play which the manager is to get up, the actors to embody, and the public to judge. But, practically, we should feel strongly inclined to give the first place to the manager. His functions most nearly resemble the general's. He may do much to induce the author to write, and he does every thing in introducing his work to the public. And he it is who should form the actor, in all cases but those where the actor, being a man of genius, has formed himself.

Let us take, then, the manager of our own times, and consider what manner of man he is. But what class of manager shall we select for analysis? For observe, that our sixteen theatres fall into subdivisions, each of which ministers to a distinct class of spectators. London has many distinct populations among its two millions and a half. The Olympic audience would turn in disgust from the hot and heavy criminality of the Victoria, and the public of the Surrey would pronounce Mr. Charles Kean's horrors sad milk-and-water. What passes for playful humour at the Standard is scouted as gross blackguardism at the Haymarket; and the Elizabethan repertory of Sadler's Wells is sneered at as "slow" by the fast youth of Drury Lane or the Adelphi. Nay, some very observant counters of the theatrical pulse will tell you that every house has its own public,—at home in no other theatre but that of their predilection.

Our ideal manager, then, must be but one species of a large genus. We will select for our scrutiny neither an east-end manager (*Director orientalis*), nor an over-the-water manager (*D. transthamesinus*), nor an Islingtonian manager (*D. legitimus* or *D. classicus*), but an average west-end manager.

Note first, then, that our manager is generally an actor. This combination of qualities has its obvious advantages; but the disadvantages of it are serious. An actor-manager is apt to overrate the obligations of the public to the theatre, to assume that "they *must* come," and that he rather does them a favour by keeping open a theatre for them to come to. And as the theatre is the especial home of tradition on all subjects, from the stuffing of a property-fowl to the stage-business of a scene of Shakespeare, an actor-manager is apt to be planted fast in the old ruts, and to feel a strong objection to being "shunted" out of them. If an old actor, he has grown up behind the scenes, till, like the monk looking on the picture in his refectory, he has learnt to think the theatre the world, and the world the theatre. He inhales the stale atmosphere of gas and orange-peel for fresh air, just as he takes stage-manners, stage-sentiment, stage-ethics, stage-lovemaking, stage-pathos, and stage-buffoonery, for good-breeding, healthy sentiment, sound mo-

rality, genuine passion, real emotion, and honest humour. Hence the danger of his repressing all genuine presentment of life in his authors or actors; or, if he must accept it from the former, of his compelling the latter so to disguise it, that it shall not be known by the public from the old stage-counterfeit so inexpressibly dear to him. It is incredible how far this disbelief in realities goes with your old actor. It runs down to the very property-men. They have traditional geese and fowls and strings of sausages and joints of meat altogether unlike real ones; and it would seem as if they believed in them more than in the originals they misrepresent. It is true, that even property-men and managers have been forced to succumb, in a certain degree, to the realising spirit of modern research; and that in all new plays, or elaborate revival of old ones, neither pains nor expense are spared to have all adjuncts, of scenery, properties, and costumes, in strict keeping with the place, personages, and period of the action. No stage-pageant of earlier times can be compared with the splendid revivals of Shakespeare's plays by Mr. Macready, or with those which we owe to Mr. Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre. But even here the improvement is confined to mere externals; while with every presentation of a stock-piece on which no hopes of a great return are founded, the old leaven of conventionalism, even in externals, reappears. If we go below the surface, we shall find this curse of conventionalism every where; mana er impresses it on author, or author, having probably had much love and some experience of the theatre before he takes to writing for it, has already caught the plague, and needs no managerial infection. Among the actors it rides rampant, except with the few who have access to society out of the theatre, and the disposition and leisure to turn their social opportunities to profit.

The first and most deeply-rooted evil of present theatrical management is stage-conventionalism; nor can we hope for any but a partial and gradual escape from it. It is too much to expect at once such a combination of fresh eye and living appreciation in a manager, with original observation, real creative power, and knowledge of life in an author, as would give us plays drawn direct from the world round about us, and not dimmed first by the writer's spectacles of dramatic tradition, and next set all awry by the manager's dirty, distorting, old theatrical "*speculum*," which he no more thinks of having replaced by a new, clean, and truly-reflecting mirror, than he thinks of substituting a best French plate for the venerable pier-glass in the green-room.

Another evil to which actor-managers are peculiarly obnoxious is professional jealousy. Acting gives such a fearful stimu-

lus to vanity, engenders such a craving for applause, and such intolerance of applause bestowed on others, that the actor-manager must be almost more than human not to abuse his power of appropriating the best parts himself, and either "shelving" his rivals, or doing them justice only when their success can come into no rivalry with his own.

On the other hand, a favourite actor may make a slave of his manager; and, with the number of theatres now open, it is rare for a public favourite not to abuse his power by the most arrogant demands and absurd caprices. Few managers have the courage to resist such pretensions; and rather than be exposed to the necessity of resisting or yielding, if they happen to be themselves favourites, they are apt to reduce their companies to the old French level—*Moi, ma femme, et quatre poupées.*

Again, the actor-manager is likely to look more to keeping up the audiences who come to his theatre than to attracting the larger public which keeps aloof from it. Hence a tendency to trust for stimulating flagging audiences to horrors more and more highly spiced, to a continually increasing splendour of costume and decoration, or to a perpetual exaggeration of fun and an ever-broadening style of buffoonery, according as the strength of the theatre lies in melodrama, spectacle, or farce. It is rare that the actor-manager takes count of the all-important fact, that persons of cultivated taste have been driven from the theatre by the absence of all such taste in the performances usually given there. And yet there is no want of evidence that the relish for theatrical amusement is not dead even in such persons. It is only dormant for want of congenial food. Whenever, by rare and happy chance, a performance is given which can amuse without coarseness or childishness; excite, without resort to crime or violation of decency; and gratify the eye, without a sacrifice of every higher satisfaction,—we find at once an improvement in the quality of audiences, alike in appearance, taste, and social position. But it is much easier to lower the style of performances than to raise it. The means of awakening interest by mere horror or startling incident, of pleasing the senses by lavish or luscious display, and of moving barren laughter by extravagance or absurdity, are always at hand. But to rouse the attention, gratify the ear and eye, and provoke the mirth of an audience which demands probability, decency, beauty, wit, or humour, requires means and appliances so difficult to find, that managers are almost excusable if they give up the quest of them in despair. But this is an evil to which all managers, whether actors or not, are equally liable. And we must set-off against the besetting sins of the actor-manager already referred to unquestionable advantages of stage-experience, and a judgment of dramatic effect,

which are likely to be possessed by an intelligent actor in a higher degree than by any one who has not ascertained by his own triumphs and failures the influences that work upon audiences. The material exigences of the modern theatre raise another barrier in the manager's path. The ordinary nightly expenses of a respectable theatre are so enormous—varying from 50*l.* in the smaller houses, to 120*l.* in the larger, and very much exceeding this in such huge houses as Drury Lane is and Covent Garden was—that a manager nowadays must be a large capitalist; and even then cannot make his speculation pay without a pretty constant run of good houses. This involves him in a primary necessity of keeping up his audiences at all costs. He cannot afford to expend, either on pieces or on the salaries of his stock-company, as much as will secure good writers or accomplished actors, because of the large nightly demands of occasional stars, or the constant outlay on fine scenery, rich dresses, numerous supernumeraries, and all the collateral cost of a spectacular class of entertainment. The material part of his undertaking eats into the intellectual. And this fatal course of large and palpable appeal to the senses, once entered upon, must be persevered in. The audiences of every theatre soon become accustomed to the fare usually served up to them; and there is no return to a wholesomer and plainer diet without such an interval of atrophy as few managers have the courage or capital to encounter. The large outlay, again, tends to involve theatrical speculators in embarrassment; and with embarrassment come all its train of ills—dishonesty, sharping, evasion of debts, discredit, the Bench, and Basinghall Street. We need not point our general remarks by any special illustrations. The memory of our readers will abundantly supply them.

The two last besetting sins of modern theatrical management to which we shall refer, are neglect of rehearsals, and indifference to the comfort of the public.

Would that we had borrowed from the modern French theatre its admirable discipline behind the curtain, as well as the pieces of its *repertoire!* Every one familiar with the arrangements behind the curtain of Parisian and London theatres must have been struck by the startling difference between the way in which a piece is got up in the one and in the other. A French rehearsal on the stage is preceded by reading and re-reading the piece in the presence of the author, whose advice is listened to with attention, his opinions consulted, his intentions weighed, and his hints put to profit. And when the actors, thus initiated into the meaning of the words they have to deliver, come to rehearse upon the stage, the author is still the important person in watching and guiding the business of the scene. It frequently happens that

during rehearsals large and elaborate changes are made, suggested sometimes by the actor, but always approved of and executed by the author. In one word, author and actors work together. The rehearsals are frequent, and most careful. Two and even three months are not unfrequently devoted to the rehearsal of a new piece. The result of all this labour is visible in the perfect naturalness with which the dialogue of the play is spoken, and the smoothness and ease with which its action is carried on, in actual representation.

In England, negligence and indifference reign at and after the first reading of the piece. Even this reading is often undertaken by the manager, and, unless the author be a good elocutionist, not without advantage. But, during this green-room reading the actors are inattentive to all but what each anticipates will be his own part. And after the reading, and hurried comparing of parts, the stage-rehearsals begin, and the author who gets his own way in any thing from this time forward must indeed be a tactician of uncommon skill, a very Machiavel of management and patience.

At the stage-rehearsals it is not the fashion to attend to emphasis, meaning, or elocution. A hurried—"O, I sha'n't do so at night," or an angry—"Why, you don't suppose I'm going to *act* at rehearsal," is the only reply vouchsafed to the alarmed author, should he remonstrate when he finds his words rattled through like a schoolboy's lesson. If he venture a suggestion as to the business of the stage, the probability is that the manager will silence him with a good-humoured—"O, I think you had better leave *that* to us;" and altogether, if he wish to save his patience, and keep his self-respect unchafed, the author's best course would often seem to be to stay away from rehearsals altogether: he will be the happier, and his play none the worse.

How much of this is due to the author himself, we shall inquire hereafter. Here we are looking at the matter with reference to the manager's business. The picture will no doubt provoke protest; but we know it to be in the main, and for most English theatres, only too true. That there are honourable exceptions, we admit. The Olympic, under its present accomplished manager, has produced pieces which testified in their smoothness and completeness of representation to a care and judgment in rehearsal indicating that to his careful study of the naturalness and finish of French acting Mr. Wigan has added an appreciation of the best point of French management.

The comfort of the public who visit the theatre, no manager, one would suppose, reasoning *a priori*, would be foolish enough to disregard. But is the accommodation of the audience duly regarded in our theatres? Let all who have run the gauntlet of box-office extortion, of box-keepers' impertinence, of hard and

narrow benches, cramped knees, the atmosphere of carbonic acid, the glare and smell of gas, the heat of a private box, the draughts of an open lobby,—answer the question. Even in the arrangement of the night's entertainments there is a total want of intelligent consideration for public convenience. The performances are almost without exception so long as to weary; they begin at an hour which clashes with the present dinner-time; and they close at an hour which cuts into the sleep of all hard-working people,—and who nowadays is not hard-working?

Some slight improvement on these points is here and there visible; but even the managers who have done most to remedy these discomforts have stopped half-way. It is difficult, we are convinced, to estimate how much increase of attraction might be obtained by abolishing the box-office shilling, the box-keepers' fee for a seat or a bill, the intrusions of the saloon-keeper with her weak tea and floury ices, by ventilating the theatre, making the seats comfortable, beginning half an hour later, playing a short *lever de rideau* before the principal piece of the evening, and diminishing the length of the night's amusements. In this point, again, the manager of the Olympic has shown more sense than his brethren; but even he has rather begun than completed the improvements still to be desiderated before the theatre can be visited with an enjoyment unmarred by a hasty dinner, and the accumulated annoyance of attempted imposition, an uncomfortable seat, a pestilential atmosphere, worn-out eyes, and a racking headache.

From managers we pass to authors.

We have said that in the days of Elizabeth the stage was the only field for the representation of life through fiction. It was also the readiest and easiest, if not the only, way of making money by the pen. Hence the rush of young wits with their books to the "sharers of the Blackfriars," or "the Fortune." The profession of authorship then was, in nineteen cases out of twenty, the profession of dramatic authorship.

In the years immediately following the Restoration, the character of dramatic authorship underwent a marked change. The stage was devoted to the reflection of gay life about town. Its poetic plays were either those of a preceding generation, or the rhyming productions of Dryden and Lee. Otway alone, a little later than these, caught a Shakespearian echo; but the theatre of the Restoration was essentially a comic stage. Puritan sourness had driven gravity out of fashion; and society, so long compelled to be straight-laced, took to going stark-naked. The court gave the cue, and the city either shook its head and stood aloof, or flung up its cap and followed.

The theatre was no resort for the graver or decenter sort.

It attracted smug precisians, like Pepys, who delighted in dabbling about the edges of dirt, and who snatched a fearful joy among the *bona robas* of the side-galleries. But such rogues could impose no restraint on actors or writers. The court furnished playwrights, as the ranks of the old cavalier army supplied players. Such actors as Hart and Mohun, Goodman and Kynaston, were spirits congenial with such authors as Etherege, Sedley, and Wycherley, and must have spoken their rattling and reckless dialogue with the unction of genuine sympathy. No period is so well represented in its comedy as that of Charles II. It borrowed from the French; but the manners of the court were French. Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, prolonged the profligacy and wit of the merry monarch's day through the graver reigns of William and Anne and the first and second Georges. By that time society had grown decenter than the theatre, though still coarse to a degree incredible to us. From the accession of George III. the stage has been growing every year less a reflection of manners; only Foote, for a time, made it an Aristophanic mirror of society. Richardson tried to do so, but merely provoked a licensing bill. Sheridan could dish up Vanbrugh for audiences who had passed away altogether from the manners of Vanbrugh's day; and when German sentiment was engrafted on our old-comedy stock, a fruit was produced altogether strange and unlike any thing in our household gardens. The plays of Colman, Morton, and Reynolds, represent only fragments of manners, and reflect no real life or character whatever.

The authors of our own time, succeeding to a legacy of stubborn fathers, testy uncles, wild young bloods, smart servants, flighty wards, and frumpish old maids, have added a profusion of French spices to the dramatic *ragoût*, so as to render the dish more thoroughly un-English. Meanwhile, from the roots of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, the novel, and from the novel the historical romance, has grown up; a new mode of representing life is laid open to minds with the fiction-fever upon them. To get to this field for the labour of the pen, there is no frowsy and repulsive theatrical waiting-room to pass through, no manager to propitiate, no touchy and vain-glorious actors to consult and measure and fit with parts, no visible public to face. The novel-reader is saved from the necessity of hissing; he can yawn and skip what bores him; he can close the book at the point of weariness, at which in the theatre he must damn. Then the huge and spreading newspaper-press is a product of our times. It brings in the quickest returns for pen-work, and demands least continuous labour. Journalism and reviewing will keep many a briefless barrister, vagrant-minded clerk, or clever man about town, who in Shakespeare's day, if he would write at all

for money, must have taken to write for the stage. The number of those who live by dramatic authorship is small. The plays of the Dramatic Authors' Society, in the list before us, are divided among some sixty writers; but with a large proportion of the sixty dramatic authorship is either an occasional resource, or an amusement of leisure hours. There are probably not more than twenty persons in England at this time permanently supporting themselves by dramatic authorship. The general practice of translation has lowered the standard of such authorship. A little stage-tact, a little readiness of words, a French dictionary, and a credit at Jeff's foreign book-shop, make many a dramatic author. If access to the theatre were easier and pleasanter, there would be more than there are of such authors: but there are enough, in all conscience. Such dramatic authors work mischief in many ways. They lower the standard of the craft, and deprive the few producers of original pieces of credit with the public and of influence in the theatre; they cut down the market-price of pieces; they supply an unwholesome and unnatural diet to audiences. The International Copyright Act with France has done nothing effectual to check the practice of stealing from the French. That act excepts adaptations from the conditions under which it lays translations. Now, all pieces transferred to our stage from the French may be called "adaptations." We are not aware of a single instance in which a French author has derived any profit under this act, nor do we believe it has hindered the translation of a single French piece. As dramatic authors are, it is little wonder they should command small consideration from managers, small respect from actors, small admiration from the public. The theatre in their hands is becoming more and more the resort of those only who seek to laugh, and are not very fastidious about the source of their laughter; nor will the evil be diminished till some theatre has established itself with a manager who shows a marked preference for original pieces. No manager can do this till original pieces are written calculated to attract audiences. To write such pieces, authors must study the life about them, and present the public with pictures of which they can recognise the truth and read the lessons. Authors must shake themselves out of two centuries of convention, and go back to reality in dramatic story and in stage representation, as the pre-Raphaelites have gone back to nature in painting. When dramatic authors do this, there will be hope for the theatre; but not till then. The task of those who attempt such a work will not be easy. Our life has parted with its most salient dramatic features. We have grown undemonstrative in manner, uniform in dress, decorous, and studiously commonplace of speech. But the great essential elements of dramatic

effect are still working under the surface of our society. The exhibition of them would be all the more *piquant* for the contrast between their great forces and the thin veneer of decorum with which we have overlaid them. We cannot believe that such an impregnation of our theatre with reality is impossible; and feeling the earnestness which marks our time, amidst all the shows, shams, and snobisms which run rampant about us, we will not look upon it as improbable.

We can afford no more space to stage-authors; the actors and the public remain to be considered. What actors are depends mainly upon managers and authors. Were the theatre worthier, it would no longer remain the profession of those who have no other. At present the feeding springs of the actors' calling are vanity and necessity. There may be something inherent in the employment which determines this; no profession, perhaps, which aims at amusing only can ever be conventionally respectable. The popular association of theatrical life with laxity and indecorum, no doubt militates strongly against the prospect of ever recruiting the stage from the same classes and styles of men as those found among the more honoured professions and the less discredited arts. The large number of our theatres, at all of which all kinds of plays are represented from time to time, has lowered the standard of excellence among our actors. We have nothing like a school now in the country theatres. The stages of the capital are no longer places for the display of excellence slowly matured at Bath or Norwich, Edinburgh or Dublin. England, thanks to railways, has become an extended London.

The poetic drama for the time being is extinct upon our stage. Macready was its last support. It is true that by aid of elaborate antiquarianism and material splendour those plays of Shakespeare that furnish a peg on which to hang fine clothes and magnificent pageantry still find overflowing audiences at the Princess's; and in remote Islington the unwearied manager of Sadler's Wells can still draw together to the Elizabethan plays unsophisticated crowds, who represent probably a state of cultivation and a power of appreciative enjoyment more resembling those of the population which filled the Blackfriars or the Globe when Shakespeare first gave his plays to the world than any other part of the London public. But apart from these exceptions, we are forced to the conclusion that our stage is becoming essentially a comic and domestic one. The *good* actors we have—and their names happily are not few—excel in these walks of the drama. But they barely leaven the lump of conceit, bad-breeding, imperfect utterance, and ungainly action that make up our body of average actors. Here again our hope of improvement must be in the combined influence

of managers, authors, and the public,—above all, of that portion of it which speaks with "voice potential" in newspaper criticism.

We are no praisers of past times—no thick-and-thin believers in the plays or the players of our fathers' and grandfathers' days. Excepting from our censure great actors and actresses in comedy and tragedy,—of whose genius it would be affectation to express a doubt,—study of the plays, the contemporary criticisms, the theatrical biographies, and the theatrical portraits of the last generation inclines us to the opinion that the style of serious acting, between the days of Colley Cibber and those of Edmund Kean, was stiff in action and over-emphatic in elocution; at once monotonous and stilted, devoid of truth to nature, yet not attaining to ideal grace; and that the comic acting had corresponding faults of exaggeration and over-colouring. But, at any rate, the old school had their art, such as it was; and their elaboration, however overdone. With Edmund Kean came in the natural school of tragic acting. The change which he inaugurated was inevitable. It did not reach our stage till it had transformed our manners of everyday life. But such an actor as Kean could leave to his brother-actors no legacy except a direction to the school in which he had studied—that of nature. To actors who would not resort to that school he could bequeath nothing but his tricks and peculiarities. The common herd of players, to whom the school of nature is for ever barred, in the absence of a formal art of the stage can but stumble on blindly, with no reliable guidance whatever. All that can be done for them by managers or authors is, to warn them against glaring violations of truth and propriety by every means in their power. As for bad manners, faults of delivery, pronunciation, and grammar, arising from want of access to cultivated society and from defects of education, the manager should make it his business to correct these in his performers far more rigidly than most managers do at present. The more intelligent actors will strive to remedy such blemishes by observation and self-culture.

We have no great tragic actor at present. Macready was the last. Mrs. Charles Kean and Miss Faucit sustain the reputation of our tragic actresses. In comic actors we are still rich. Though we have lately lost Farren, Mrs. Orger, and Mrs. Glover, the names of Harley, Buckstone, the Keeleys—man and wife,—Wright, and Compton, in broad comedy and farce; of Charles Mathews and Leigh Murray in light and genteel comedy; of the Wigans, Webster, Emery, Miss Woolgar, and Mrs. Stirling in a wider range, from the natural humour to the unheroic pathos of domestic life, still uphold the credit of our stage in its lighter and lower forms of personation. Mr. Robson deserves a place by himself. He is *sui generis*, and as yet cannot be classified.

No actor has appeared in our time with such a power of self-excitement; and if he can rein-in this invaluable but yet dangerous faculty, and subdue it to his will—presuming his will to be directed by more than common intelligence—it will carry him much farther than it has yet done, and towards loftier efforts in his art than mere burlesque and farce can find place for. His performance of Desmarets, in *Plot and Passion*, had passages which electrified the audience.

We have left ourselves little space to speak of the public—that important agent in dramatic presentation, in the double capacity of audience and critic. Audiences come to the theatre to be amused. In old times there was little choice of amusement. Shakespeare had to contend only with rival companies and the bear-garden. Ben Jonson found the puppets formidable competitors of actors of flesh and blood. In later times the opera divided with the theatre the fashionable world of pleasure-seekers. But now amusements for mind and senses woo the world of London at every turn. Lecture-rooms, dioramas, panoramas, cheap concerts, oratorios, public gardens, and innumerable other diversions, suited to every scale of purse and every variety of taste and cultivation, prefer their rival claims with all the arts of puff and poster, advertisement and woodcut. Tired with work of hand or brain, wearied out with the prosecution of our special branch of that one business of all of us—money-making, we are growing every day less and less disposed to all employments of our leisure which take us from our chimney-corners to tax the brain or excite any nerves but the risible ones. The world and the world's work is most easily forgotten in laughter, or in pleasure of the senses. We can read and think at home. We come to the theatre to laugh, or to see a show, or to have our ears tickled. Still, shows may be tasteful and informing, music ennobling as well as sweet, and sound lessons may be insinuated in laughter. And, as things are nowadays, for a manager who does not aspire to grand and elaborate pageantry, and who has not the aid of opera, "*ridendo dicere verum*" would seem about the highest aim open to the artists of the theatre, until some daring genius ventures to lift the veil which hides the dark undercurrents and deep abysses of modern society. Of the public in its capacity of critic we cannot speak with any satisfaction. Stage-criticism has fallen into bad hands, and is executed under conditions which go far to make it utterly worthless. Most of the dramatic critics for the newspapers are themselves dramatic authors, and self-interest and private intimacies check their pens and sway their judgments. Theatrical criticism is reduced to a mere *compte-rendu* of plots, wound up by a jingle of cut-and-dry phrases in praise or blame of the actors. It may be that the majority of our

pieces and our actors deserve nothing better. If so, the critics should at least avow this in excuse for the slightness of their work, and should support their avowal by greater care whenever the merits or demerits of play or performer justify it. The elevation of the standard of theatrical criticism is one of the indispensable conditions, and most powerful means, towards the improvement of our stage.

The preceding remarks may appear harsh: at all events they are honestly meant. It seems to us inevitable, that any writer on the present aspect of theatrical matters who entertains respect for the dramatic art should dwell more on the blemishes than on the beauties, on the failings than on the felicities, of our contemporary theatre. That any isolated piece of criticism, such as this, will have much effect, is not to be hoped. We must be satisfied with having pointed out some of the chief reasons why the stage has so far ceased to be an art, while it continues to be so favourite an amusement; and we will conclude with an expression of our hope that we may live to see it more of the one, without being less of the other.

Art. VII.—THE POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF AMERICA.

Things as they are in America. By William Chambers. Edinburgh and London, 1854.

Life of Horace Greeley, Editor of the New-York Tribune. By J. Parton. New York, 1855.

Notes on Public Subjects, made during a Tour in the United States and in Canada. By H. Seymour Tremenheere. London, 1852.

The Constitution of the United States compared with our own. By H. Seymour Tremenheere. London, 1855.

Private Correspondence of Henry Clay. By C. Cotton, LL.D. New York, 1856.

In the whole range of political and social questions there are none surpassing in speculative interest or urgent practical importance those involved in the relations between Great Britain and the United States; and these have rarely been more critical or more interesting than at the present moment. The actual excitement may, and we doubt not will, pass away; the menacing danger of a quarrel, artificial in its origin and almost ludicrously insignificant in its ostensible pretext, may be averted by tranquil patience on the one side, and the subsidence of effervescing feeling on the other: but the real and fundamental causes which have led to both are deep-seated and abiding, and as long

as they remain undiminished and uncomprehended, the passion and the peril may at any instant be renewed.

There are no two countries on the earth a thorough and perennial cordiality of friendship between whom is so essential to their own comfort or to human progress. Bound together heart and hand, each would be invulnerable; a close and confiding union might enable them not only to defy the world and to control it, but—what is incomparably more important—to point its course, to aid its development, to guide and uphold its footsteps to a destiny as noble and a position as enviable as our own. Severed from one another, divided by mutual suspicions, harassed by mutual animosity, weakened by mutual strife secret or avowed, we can never be any thing else than a drag upon each other's progress, a thorn in each other's side, a tool for the interests and passions of other states to work with, a scandal to the cause of popular government, and a barrier to the spread of liberty and peace.

No nations, it would seem, ought to understand each other so thoroughly or to love each other so well. Our blood is closely allied; our institutions are very similar; our language and religion are almost identical; our pursuits and our character present far more points of resemblance than of difference, and far more than we have in common with any other people; and our commercial relations are on a scale of magnitude and intimacy such as the world has never yet witnessed in any age or in any quarter. Yet, in spite of all this, there exist causes of dislike, distrust, ill-appreciation, and hostility, which it appears almost impossible to eradicate—which keep us constantly asunder, and frequently embitter and exasperate our intercourse to a degree which reaches nearly to the boiling-point. Unlucky historical antecedents; one war in which America was signally successful; another in which England was unquestionably in the wrong; contiguity of frontier; the tone of quiet and domineering superiority not unreasonable in a nation which has grown old amid centuries of grandeur; the jealous and irritable susceptibility not unnatural in a nation young, vain, and ambitious of distinction, conscious of vast energies, and confident in a mighty future, but fretted by misgivings lest its position should not be fully recognised, and therefore on the watch for every semblance of a slight; the usual restless inclination of an adolescent athlete to measure himself with a champion of established fame; a certain steady degradation in the Transatlantic institutions, which makes them year by year less in harmony with our own; the perpetual augmentation of the population of the Union by discontented and turbulent emigrants from Europe, whose hatred to England is at once a passion and a creed; and, finally, the

existence of a special "domestic institution" in America, which we regard with condemnation and abhorrence, and which they themselves in secret feel to be a danger, an embarrassment, and a reproach, but in public think it necessary to defend with the vehemence and anger with which men always defend their vulnerable points;—all these things are perpetual sources of irritation and misunderstanding, which operate powerfully to "separate chief friends," and to make "a man's foes those of his own household," or at least of his own race.

Yet there is no nation on the earth whom it so much imports us to study and to read aright as the American. We may learn from them many things in the way of warning, and some things also in the way of stimulus and of example. We see in them a sort of caricature or exaggeration of what we once were, and of what we may possibly become. We may trace in their conduct, their character, and their tendencies, some of our past vices and many of our future dangers. They are proceeding at full swing in a course which we are just entering with hesitating and reluctant footsteps, but along which a numerous and energetic party are anxious to hurry us with accelerated pace. They have already made many changes in their institutions which we are just beginning to contemplate as possible. They are now feeling, by ample and sad experience, some of those mischievous results which we as yet see only as speculative consequences, or of the first faint actual pressure of which we are barely beginning to be sensible. They are trying constitutional experiments which their singular social condition enables them to try with inconsiderable risk, but which England could not venture on except at the hazard of her very existence. It behoves us, then, to watch them with the most vigilant attention; to make the results of their experience our own, without incurring its hazards; to use them as vicarious sufferers; and to profit alike by their trials, their achievements, and their failures. Seventy-five years ago they had a political constitution not very dissimilar from our own, but very dissimilar from what theirs now is: since then, all their movements have been, as all ours now are, towards a more and more unmodified democracy. Have the results in the United States been such as to afford matter for congratulation to them, or matter of beckoning encouragement to us?

With regard to the state of feeling between the people of England and of the United States a misconception exists on both sides of the water, which it is most important to clear up. Americans who come over to this country for the first time are commonly surprised at the frank cordiality of their reception, and express their agreeable disappointment with a *naïveté* which shows what a very different welcome they anticipated. Here and

there, indeed, a spoiled Yankee of inordinate conceit and offensive manners meets with the same ridicule or the same repulse in society as he would have done had he belonged to any other country, or been a native of our own: he sets down as an insult to his nation the rebuffs which his own individual arrogance or vulgarity has brought upon him, and returns, soured and malignant, to his own shores, to console himself by spreading misrepresentation and ill-will. But, these rare exceptions apart, the feeling of Americans, on landing in England, is that we have described. They find every where the greatest interest felt as to the progress of their wonderful country; profound admiration of its energy; and a somewhat excessive disposition to hold it up for envy, and to use it as an instrument for depreciating ourselves. They find every American author of real eminence read here nearly as widely as there—applauded quite as generously, appreciated quite as justly; they find Longfellow the most popular living poet next to Tennyson; they find Channing ranking among our most valued divines, Kent and Story among our most eminent jurists, Prescott among our first-rate historians, Cooper and Washington Irving among our most universally read authors in the lighter paths of literature. They meet, too, on all hands, with the most earnest and genuine expressions of a wish for cordial amity and alliance, and the deepest regret at any subject of dispute or alienation that may have arisen between the nations. And if they are gentlemen by education and breeding, they experience no difficulty—*quite* as little, certainly, as an Englishman would do—in gaining access to the best society which the old country can produce.

A similar agreeable surprise awaits the Englishman who visits the United States. He was prepared, perhaps, by the perusal of American newspapers and American history, as well as by books of travels, to be received with some roughness, and not a little suspicion and dislike. He finds every house most hospitably open to him, a willingness to show him every kindness and to do him all honour. He observes an almost over-anxious desire for the good opinion of England—a sort of unavowed and perhaps unconscious feeling that America can scarcely trust her own estimate of herself and her achievements till the stamp of English appreciation has been set upon them. In discussing political matters, he finds always great shrewdness and usually great fairness and candour—a willingness to admit what is regretable, perilous, or culpable in their own institutions and proceedings—and a disposition to do full justice to whatever is admirable and stable and dignified in the character and constitution of Great Britain. He finds, too, among those whose society he frequents, an entire neglect or condemnation of the

often unwarranted language of the government and of the press of the United States, an earnest belief that the friendship of the two countries never *will* be broken, and a resolute determination that it never *shall*. His surprise and perplexity at the seeming discrepancy between the language of the nation and that of its ostensible organs is natural; and, no doubt, it needs an explanation.

The truth, and the explanation, is simply this. Between the upper and the educated classes of the two nations—between those Americans and those English who know and visit one another—between their merchants, their proprietors, their cultivated men—there is unfeigned cordiality and sympathy. Between the *masses* of the two people—between the two nations which reside at opposite sides of the Atlantic, which do not know each other, which do not visit each other, which look at each other only through their respective governments and journals—there is misunderstanding, coldness, mistrust, dislike—and on one side a feeling of jealousy amounting to absolute hostility. The reason—the main reason, for there are several subsidiary ones—may be thus broadly stated. *They* read us through the medium of our history, or what they are taught of it, and through the distorted prejudices and passions of the immigrants who crowd their shores; and *we* read them through the language of their newspapers, their officials, and their political orators:—the truth being that neither party could well draw their impressions of the other from more unfaithful or misleading sources. We will speak first of the American notion of Great Britain.

There prevails a very general notion across the water that we are a *dictatorial* nation. "England," they say, "is always wishing to dictate; and America will not be dictated to." We confess that there is some justification—some colour of excuse, at least—for this charge. Our history is against us. It is difficult to get rid of a bad character. It sticks by a man long after he has ceased to deserve it; and few will believe in the depth or sincerity of the repentance of one who has been once a sinner. We must admit that England *used to be* given to interference and dictation. She often meddled where she had no business, and spoke in a tone she had no right to assume. Unfortunately, too, the great mass of Americans—and we must ever bear in mind that with them it is the great mass (and not, as with us, the more highly educated few) who decide the national feeling and influence the government action—are only slightly acquainted with any history but their own, and with English history so far as it is interwoven with their own. Now it cannot be denied, that on the two principal occasions when this interweaving took place England did appear in the character of an

overbearing and peremptory state. Hear Mr. Tremenheere on this point. (*Notes*, p. 128.)

"Raising my eyes from the daily study of these [newspapers], I was tempted to ask myself whether it was really true that I, as an Englishman, was meeting with nothing but cordiality, civility, and kindness from every one I fell in with, while probably every individual among them had just been reading, in some paper or other, the most virulent denunciations of England, the bitterest taunts against her policy, the most undervaluing remarks on her power, and the most depreciating estimates of the individual character of her people.

After a three-months' course of these papers, I think I am safe in saying that the ordinary tone of more than two-thirds of them is of that quality, whenever they take occasion to discuss any thing in which England, or English customs, or English character may be involved; and that in a moment of the least political excitement a still larger proportion of them join in the same cry; and it then requires no ordinary courage in the editor of an American newspaper to deal out to England, or to any one of her actions, the simplest meed of fairness.

I asked very many persons what was the meaning of all this; and the answer I invariably received was, 'Oh, you must not mind what our papers say; we don't read such trash as most of them contain; it is written to catch the Irish votes at the elections.'

With all deference to my numerous and most respectable informants, I am not satisfied that this answer goes to the root of the matter.

For a solution, I think it necessary to begin with the beginning; and that beginning is, *in a nation educated all on one plan, the public schools.*

In the course of my visits to these schools, in the range of country I have described, I asked permission to look, among other school-books, at the books of history in common use. I looked through them all. They contain either a very brief *résumé* of history, both ancient and modern,* or of modern alone, principally that of England; so brief, however, as to be entirely unimpressive to the minds of youth, being little more than a mere dry detail of facts and dates. The staple of these books is, as is very natural, American history, from the landing of the Puritans to the termination of the last war. The most prominent part is, as naturally, given to the history of the war of independence. Of the spirit of their forefathers in undertaking that war, and of their courage in bringing it to a successful issue, they have much reason to be proud. The exploits of that war, and the successful ones of the last, figure of course conspicuously in those histories. The error

* "The text-book of history now in use in our schools is not a good one. . . . We will give an illustration of its character. In the part devoted to Grecian history, *the names of Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, and Leonidas are not introduced in the narration of the Persian invasions*; and the name of not a single inhabitant of Greece who lived between the time of Solon and that of Epaminondas is mentioned in the course of that part of the history. Yet this period of nearly two hundred years was prolific of great men, and is probably the most important era in the history of civilisation."—*Report of the Boston Public Schools*, 1849.

of the British Government and people in provoking the struggle is chastised with no sparing hand; while the power of the American people, as exhibited in beating the British Government, and the glory thence resulting, occupy a conspicuous place. As long as such histories are written in a fair and simply patriotic spirit, without seeking to perpetuate hostile feelings, and without either unjustifiable exaggerations or unfair concealments (and I cannot say that some of the books I looked at are free from such defects), no one can complain that American children should read principally American history; but a young person who has been instructed in a course of history in which a few years and a few events are made to assume such prominence, while the history of previous centuries, and of subsequent events, is all but unknown, will be apt to have very exaggerated ideas of his own nation, and a very slender one of any other."

We can well understand how those who know little of English history except at those periods where it was interwoven with that of America, and who read those periods only in works written from an American point of view, tinged with American prejudices, and expressly designed to exasperate American patriotism, should conceive of us as an arrogant, aggressive, ambitious, and intermeddling nation. We can only assure them that we are wholly altered since those days; and we can safely appeal, in proof of our reformation, to our entire history (India *perhaps* apart) since 1815. Our sin and our danger now lie in a precisely opposite direction. Not only have we become indolent, forbearing, and enduring; willing to compromise and anxious to accommodate; hating the trouble of dispute, and dreading both the cost, the folly, and the sin of war; but our national policy has been of late, and is still, too largely influenced by a school or party which holds that isolation is our true wisdom, that a nation has no duties towards other nations, and that we ought to stand tamely by in selfish or sublime indifference, whatever tricks are played or whatever atrocities are committed on the earth. If we err in future, it will not be by meddling too often, but by abstaining from meddling even when abstinence becomes a crime. If we come into collision with our neighbours, it will not be from a wish to dictate, but from the inevitable necessity of at last resisting dictation. The temper of the nation is greatly altered: it is in some respects wiser, in some respects weaker. Nothing short of the unbending arrogance and the undisguised aggressiveness of Russia could have dragged us into this war; nothing short of equally offensive behaviour on the part of some other state will drag us into war again. We now habitually only long for peace—to lead a quiet life—to keep out of hot water. We ask only of our neighbours—and of our American neighbours most especially—that they will not, by unendurable encroach-

ments or inadmissible pretensions, bully us out of our indolent repose.

Unfortunately the prejudices which history has raised against us are perpetually confirmed and fanned by the Europeans who annually flock by thousands to the New World. The voices of the living echo and reiterate the false accusations of the dead. America now reckons among her population vast numbers who are Americans neither by birth, descent, nor feeling,—who are in her, but not of her,—who disregard her interests, abuse her hospitality, and bring discredit on her character. In virtue of the unbounded liberality of her customs, the settled freedom of her institutions, and the rich rewards which she offers to industry and enterprise, she has for nearly two generations been the refuge of adventurers from every portion of the Old World. The active and the striving saw in her a field where their energies would be secure of wealth and greatness; the depressed and despairing flocked to a land where success was possible and hope was reasonable; the loving fled to her as a country where marriage would be feasible, and where children would be a help and not a burden; the discontented sought her as a land of promise; the tossed and persecuted, as a place of rest; adventurers of every character and of every sort of antecedents,—those who had made Europe too hot to hold them,—those who had quitted it because it was too sober for their wild dreams and too strong for their meditated crimes; fugitives from tyranny, fugitives from justice;—all these crowded to the great republic of the New World, and found there a ready welcome, or at least a hospitable shelter and an unsuspicious and uninquiring home.

Among this miscellany two classes are especially noticeable —the immigrants from Central Europe and the immigrants from Ireland. For some time back each of these classes has numbered on an average upwards of 100,000 annually, and each, with its descendants, is calculated now to reach about two millions. Thus, out of a total white population of *twenty* millions, *four* consist of aliens,—men who are not naturalised at heart into their adopted country,—who are still rather Irish, or Germans, than United-States men,—who yet cherish all the prejudices and passions they brought with them from the land of their extraction,—and who are, in truth, almost as anti-American as they are anti-English. A considerable proportion of the Germans belonged to the political malcontents of their native land; who had long sighed for a liberty which they could not attain; who had been worsted in their endeavours to overthrow or to reform their oppressive governments at home; who, in fact, constituted the Republicans, Socialists, and revolutionary *party* generally, in the various states of Central Europe. Most

of these had imbibed, before they crossed the Atlantic, a thorough distrust and dislike of England—often with little reasonable ground. She had disappointed their expectations. They had looked to her, as the one great free state in Europe, for aid, or at least for sympathy, in their various insurrectionary movements; they had flattered themselves that they were certain of obtaining it; they had deceived themselves, or had suffered their leaders to deceive them, into a belief that it had been first promised and then withheld; and they resented the disappointment of their unwarranted hopes, as if a positive engagement had been broken and a positive injury inflicted. We need not tell Englishmen, nor any one who knows the strong clinging of the English government to the established and the legitimate, how entirely baseless, in nearly every instance, were these self-deceiving hopes. But, nevertheless, they were firmly held by thousands of insurgents throughout Europe, who first settled in their own minds what Great Britain ought to do; then persuaded themselves that she would do it; and finally hated her because she had not done it. There can be no question that England is, and has long been, in sad disrepute with the popular party on the Continent; and that those belonging to it, who have crossed the Atlantic in consequence of the ruin of their hopes, have carried their animosity against us along with them, and preach it as a creed in their new country.

Of the sentiments towards England which the Irish immigrants have carried with them into the United States it is needless to speak. The names of Meagher and Mitchell are sufficient. The Hibernian detestation of the British government dates far back in history. It partook of all the elements of discord which could fan a sentiment into a passion—animosity of conquest and defeat, animosity of race, animosity of politics, animosity of religion. The perverse and apparently innate lawlessness of the Irish no doubt made it a matter of enormous difficulty to govern them at once mildly and effectively. Unhappily, too, for generations we did neither. Our government was undeniably oppressive and unjust. Our laws, as regarded Catholics, were intolerant and iniquitous in the extreme. There was ample warrant for Irish hatred of the British government. But the feeling survived—as was inevitable—long after its causes and its justification had been removed. The fairest government, the kindest treatment, the most equal laws, the most unbounded and generous aid in time of calamity, have done nothing to appease a hatred which at last became at once criminal and insane. Politicians, who had neither patriotism to inspire them, nor wisdom to guide them, nor Christianity to restrain them, found gratification for their passions and hope for

their ambition in exasperating to the utmost the blind fury of the poor and ignorant, and giving to the hatred between Celt and Saxon the deadly and incurable character of an hostility of race. Hundreds of thousands of these misled unfortunates perished in the famine, in spite of the most gigantic and generous efforts of English humanity to save them. Hundreds of thousands more flocked to America, and flock there yearly still—disturbing their adopted country with their incorrigible turbulence, inflaming it by their wild passions, misleading it by their insane delusions, and spreading through the length and breadth of the land mental and moral poison of the most subtle and degrading kind.

Unfortunately, too, the institutions and customs of the United States give great facilities to both these classes of aliens to influence the conduct and excite the feelings of their new country. Naturalisation is easily obtained, sometimes after a short residence, sometimes with scarcely any residence at all. In a land where suffrage, nearly universal, every where prevails, immigrants soon become voters, and as such are sought for, flattered, and cajoled by politicians of every party; their support is bid for; their prejudices are humoured or adopted; and the ambitious and unscrupulous candidates for place, or power, or senatorial distinctions, are soon made aware that a profession of the most rabid hostility to Great Britain is the surest mode of securing Irish and sometimes German votes. Rancorous Hibernian orators rave at public meetings and on forest "stumps;" and it is well known that, of all the outrageous and virulent abuse of England which so disfigures the American press, nearly one-half proceeds from Irish pens, and the other half is a disreputable and dishonest pandering to the exigencies of Irish passion. It must be set down either to a populace whom Irish lies have perverted, or to politicians to whom Irish votes are necessary.

All this is well understood and deeply regretted by the respectable and sound-hearted of the Americans themselves. They are deeply concerned and bitterly indignant at seeing their country's name thus taken in vain, their country's policy distorted and misdirected, their country's energies wasted and turned astray, and their country's reputation lowered and stained, by foreigners whose designs they see through and whose character they despise. The basis of the great "Know-Nothing" party is a conviction of the necessity of shaking off this low and ignominious foreign yoke, if the name of America is to be respected among nations, and if American citizenship is henceforth to be a title of honour and a word of trust.

So much for the causes which have led America to misunderstand Great Britain. Those which lead to a corresponding mis-

conception and mistrust on our side are somewhat different. We are obliged to estimate the feelings of our Transatlantic brethren towards us by the conduct of their government, and the preponderating language of their press. Now, neither the government nor the press are in any degree or sense faithful representatives of those classes which are the real life-blood and essence of the American NATION—which are its redeeming element, its future hope, its sound heart, and in literature, in society, in property, in every thing but politics, its influential portion. This was not so once. It seems strange and almost paradoxical that it should be so now,—that it can be so in a purely democratic government, where the people choose their own government and make their own press. But the fact is not to be disputed; and the cause and the history of the fact are most instructive. Let us trace it in the *government*, to begin with.

On the first formation of the constitution of the United States, when the spirit of warm pure patriotism that had animated them through the war of independence still beat in the hearts of the people, and when the men who in the field or in council had guided them to their great victory still survived to teach them how to use it, the Congress elected under that constitution did undoubtedly represent the feelings of the nation, and the government appointed according to its prescribed forms did carry into action its deliberate will. But there were elements in that constitution which menaced degeneracy even at the outset, —elements which its wise founders clearly foresaw and earnestly endeavoured to provide against. The dangers which they scented afar off have all come upon it, and the bulwarks they had erected to avert them have all been swept away. The government and the congress still—though sometimes imperfectly—represent the governing classes; but those governing classes are no longer the high intelligence, the competent culture, the lofty patriotism, nor the secured property of the nation. Degeneracy of the most dangerous kind has crept into every department, from the supreme executive to the lowest judicial office. With Mr. Tremenheere's able help, let us trace the extent of this, and the mode in which it has been brought about. And first with respect to the President.

"Energy in the executive," says Judge Story, certainly one of the wisest men America, or indeed any country, has produced, "is a leading character in the definition of a good government. . . . . A feeble executive implies a feeble execution of the government. A feeble executive is but another name for a bad execution; and a government ill-executed, whatever may be its theory, must in practice be a bad government." Now, the executive of the United States is unquestionably feeble. The President is

a bundle of anomalies: he is feeble, though possessed of great constitutional powers, and disposing of enormous patronage; though directly elected by the people, he is seldom the man the people wished to choose; and though nominated by them, and responsible to them, he can yet act and govern in a manner the most opposite to their desires.

He is feeble practically and morally, though not constitutionally. Being the creature of a popular contest, the result of a great party struggle, the nominee of a crowd of zealous electioneering agents who have spent time, money, and character in elevating him to his present post, he has incurred, in the course of the contest, a host of tacit obligations and engagements which derogate deplorably from his free agency. He cannot well act against his supporters, even when lawless and turbulent. He cannot well act except through his supporters, however worthless or incompetent they may be. His patronage and his policy are alike mortgaged; and he steps into his seat encumbered with positive promises and moral debts. He is feeble, again, with all the feebleness of a fettered will, and a position full of temptations. Being elected only for a short period (four years), he has little motive to put to hazard his popularity by controlling or opposing any prevalent passion of the hour, to steer an independent course which might bring him only perplexity and trouble, or to form a high and dutiful conception of a power which he is to lay down so soon. Being so short a time in office, also, he has neither the motive nor the means to acquire that mastery of his functions without which it is impossible to discharge them with wisdom, with decision, or with firmness. He has scarcely become familiar with the duties of his post before he is called upon to abdicate. Lastly, being re-eligible, his whole first tenure of office becomes inevitably one long electioneering canvass: his first aim is to make as many friends and as few enemies as possible, to catch every breath of popular favour which may aid him in his object, to fan every popular passion by means of which he can hope to ride back to power: he is for *ever on the hustings*, and addressing the "free and independent electors;"—and no sceptre was ever yet held with integrity and firmness that was wielded over a capricious constituency by an expectant candidate.

Of the evils arising from this last source of feebleness, nearly every year has of late given us painful proof. Unhappily, it is too well known in America that by no means can an expiring or obnoxious President so surely recover his popularity and promote his re-election, as by flattering the national weakness in favour of territorial extension, and by adopting an arrogant and dictatorial tone towards foreign nations, and especially towards Great *Britain*. Not that it would aid his design actually to involve his

country in a serious war; on the contrary, such a result (unless he were clearly in the right) would probably be fatal to his hopes. But he never fears that it will actually come to this; and, in the mean time, a little safe bullying may fill his sails, and get up an agreeable excitement. Something of the sort has, therefore, become a periodical trick—to the great discomfort of other nations, and the great injury of American character. For example:

"Having been elected by all," says Mr. Tremenheere, "by a vote nearly unanimous in the Convention, and by the joint efforts of the various sections of his own party throughout the country, Mr. Pierce has, since his election, proceeded to offer his patronage to, and to distribute it among persons belonging to those various sections; and in some instances, not feeling himself restricted to one section of opinion only, he is said to have gone beyond the limit of his own party connections. For this, and for a 'vacillating policy,' to which it is supposed to have led, he has been denounced by influential portions of the democratic press; and he is told, with great vehemence, that *nothing but some bold stroke of policy can restore him to his former popularity.* . . . .

If a President of the United States is capable and ambitious, he must necessarily wish to be re-elected at the expiration of his four years of office. To be re-elected, he must be popular; and to be popular, it is possible that it may be necessary for him to adopt a line of policy which, to say the least, may be 'disquieting' to, if it do not actually produce collision with, some of the other powers of the world, in defence of their rights and interests." (*Constitution of United States*, p. 227.)

The menace above referred to seems to have had its effect on Mr. Pierce. Indeed, his whole administration has been a series of "bold" and not very decorous "strokes to recover his popularity." In his inaugural address, in March 1853, he proceeded to pander to the popular cry for Cuba which was then in vogue, by hoisting the flag of aggression at once, and declaring that "it is not to be disguised that the attitude of the United States as a nation, and its position on the globe, *render the acquisition of certain possessions not within the jurisdiction of the United States* eminently important for their protection, if not in future essential for the preservation of the rights of commerce and the peace of the world." He affirmed, moreover, as "a fundamental principle, that the rights, security, and repose of this continent *reject the idea of interference or colonisation* ON THIS SIDE OF THE OCEAN *by any foreign power*, beyond its present jurisdiction, as impossible."

Mr. Pierce's next step was even a more scandalous one in the same direction. Either of his own notion, or acting at the instigation of some one worse than himself, he appointed Mr. Pier-

Soulé as ambassador to the Court of Spain. Now Mr. Soulé was a noted man at New Orleans; he had been among the most zealous in approving the piratical expedition of Lopez against Cuba, even if he were not directly concerned in it; he had ostentatiously regretted its failure; he had publicly declared his conviction that Cuba ought, and his determination that it should belong to the United States. He was, therefore, the last man whom a gentleman, or a person of common decency even, would have selected to send as representative of the republic to Madrid. After his appointment he delivered a public harangue, reiterating his offensive doctrines, and intimating that he now hoped to succeed, by some means or other, in carrying out his projects of spoliation and aggrandisement. Such a speech any where else would have insured the immediate cancelling of his appointment. Not so, however, at Washington, under the presidency of Mr. Pierce. Mr. Soulé was sent out to Madrid as Minister from the States; and we only echo the sentiment of every well-bred and right-minded citizen of the Union, when we say that a more flagrant insult was never offered to a European government, nor a more offensive and ungentlemanly act ever committed by a man in high authority. It was a piece of electioneering flattery thrown out to the bullying propensities of the virulent and vulgar populace. It was a deliberate act of low ruffianism, indicating an absence of all perception not only of diplomatic decorum, but of common decency. The government of Spain deserves little consideration at the hands of any state, least of all at ours: its mingled arrogance, bigotry, imbecility, and corruption, prevent much feeling of sympathy or compassion; but from America it scarcely merited so outrageous an affront, and we wonder it should have submitted to it. Mr. Soulé went to Madrid; but his conduct there and in France was such that even his own government was at last obliged to recall him.

A similar course has been pursued since. As the unpopularity of the President and his cabinet increases, and as their term of power draws to a close, the necessity of "some bold stroke of policy" becomes more apparent and more urgent. The conduct of Mr. Pierce on the Kansas question has so exasperated the Northern States, and so startled and alarmed some even of his own supporters, that it is only by agitating foreign topics that he can hope to divert attention from his home proceedings; it is only by getting up a war-fever that he has the least chance of recovering the ground which he has lost. Hence the desperate attempt which he has made to fix a quarrel on Great Britain about the matter of our unfortunate and injudicious endeavour to recruit our army from across the water. The government of this country, we

believe, were led into this mistake by the language of sympathy with our cause held by the American Minister in London. As soon as they found that it was likely to give offence, or rather to be made an occasion of offence, in the States, they at once stopped all proceedings, and volunteered an expression of regret as prompt and ample as any gentleman or any government could offer to another. Mr. Buchanan was satisfied: any one who was *willing* to be satisfied would have been so too. But Mr. Pierce was not satisfied: he was baulked of a "very pretty quarrel;" and he has endeavoured to prolong the dispute by demanding "reparation" as well as apology. Not content with this, he is endeavouring—by raising a dispute as to the interpretation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty of 1850—to enlist on behalf of his waning star the national jealousy of the Americans against any European State which holds a footing on the continent which they assume to belong and to be destined exclusively to them. We do not for a moment suppose that the United States will allow him to declare war on such a pretext, nor so to act against Great Britain as to compel us to declare war; but he is playing a desperate and dangerous game,—and (this is the point to which we desire at present to direct attention) a game which no executive chief who had a firm or a long hold of power would ever feel the least desire or the least need to play. He is warlike, because he is moribund and feeble, and must truckle to the passions of the warlike mob of constituents on whose breath his fate depends.

In the second place, as we have said, the President of the United States, though directly nominated by the people, is seldom or never the person whom the people desire or intend to nominate. He is generally "a nobody"—almost always something between an accident and a compromise. This has arisen from the mode in which the election is conducted, and is a result entirely at variance with the intentions of those who decided on that mode. Originally the President was chosen by a body of electors nominated by the Legislature of each State. The candidate who had a *positive* majority of the votes of these electors was President. But if no candidate had this positive majority, the House of Representatives named the President out of the five names highest on the list of candidates. It was found that this system very frequently threw the choice into the hands of the House of Representatives, and in the year 1804 it was therefore replaced by the arrangement which now prevails, by which the entire electoral body throughout the Union name certain delegates who meet on a certain day fixed by Congress, and then elect the President, *virtually according to instructions or pledges* previously given. "But," says Mr. Tremenheere,

"Another practice has arisen, equally unknown to the constitution

and equally destructive of all independence on the part of the electors. It is obvious that if all the candidates for the presidency on either side were to be submitted to the electors, there would be a great probability that no one would obtain a majority of the whole number of votes; and that consequently the selection of a President would be transferred to the House of Representatives in the manner pointed out by the constitution.

To prevent this, delegates of each party are appointed previously [irregularly and arbitrarily] to meet in convention [or *caucus*, as it is called], and to determine which of the perhaps numerous candidates on their side *shall be adopted as the candidate of the party.*

When the convention has met and decided, an announcement is made of the result, and all the electors belonging to their party, or to any one of the many shades of it throughout the Union, *are expected to give their vote accordingly,* at the formal and actual election for president, on the day appointed by congress for that ceremony. Thus the whole numerical force of each party is directed in favour of one candidate; and the probability is, that when the votes come to be opened in congress, the individual at the head of the poll will be found to have the required majority of the whole number voting, and will therefore be duly elected; and the necessity accordingly be obviated of calling in the aid of the House of Representatives.

But the consequence of this system is, that, so far from the electors bringing to bear their 'information, discernment, and independence' upon the selection of a president (as the constitution designed), it occasionally happens that they are required to give, and do give, their votes in a body for an individual, to be elected by them as President, *whose name as a politician they may have scarcely ever heard of,* and of whose qualifications for that high office they know absolutely nothing; and this, after having expended many months' exertions, and manifested the highest degree of interest, in favour of one or more of the most distinguished men in the Union belonging to their side of politics. The last presidential election afforded a complete illustration of this process.*

The candidates on the democratic side were originally no fewer than eight: Cass, Buchanan, Douglas, Marcy, Butler, Houston, Lane, and Dickenson;—all men 'prominently known to their party,' and the first three supported with great enthusiasm by large sections of that party throughout the Union.

The convention to decide which among these various candidates should be recommended to the democratic party for their votes at the election, assembled at Baltimore on the 1st June 1852. At the first ballot General Cass obtained the greatest number of votes, viz. 116 out of 283, but a number far below the requisite *absolute* majority. The *ninth* ballot gave: Cass 112, Buchanan 87, Douglas 39. The

* We should state, that the mischiefs of this system are clearly seen by numbers of politicians in the United States, and energetic endeavours are being made to procure a change. See the excellent speech of Mr. Curtis at Boston in Oct. 1852, on occasion of Mr. Webster's nomination.

twenty-second ballot gave: Cass 33, Douglas 80, Buchanan 101. The *thirty-fifth* gave: Cass 131, Douglas 52, Buchanan 32.

On this the sixth day of the meeting *a new name appeared for the first time in the lists*,—that of Mr. Pierce of New Hampshire, a gentleman well known to his friends as a lawyer of ability; also as having creditably fulfilled the duties of a member of the House of Representatives and of the Senate; better known, however, as having joined the army as a volunteer on the breaking out of the Mexican war, and as having commanded with distinction a brigade in that war, with the rank of general. It will, nevertheless, imply no disrespect to Mr. Pierce, if I repeat what was the universal expression, according to the public prints, throughout the Union, that no individual could have been more surprised at Mr. Pierce's nomination for the exalted and responsible office of chief magistrate of the Republic than Mr. Pierce himself. On the *thirty-fifth* ballot, the first in which Mr. Pierce's name appeared, he received 15 votes. On the *forty-ninth*, the numbers voting for him were 283 out of a total of 288—a vote which five more would have made unanimous. Mr. Pierce was accordingly recommended to the democratic constituencies throughout the Union, and was elected by a considerable majority over his Whig opponent; the numbers being for Mr. Pierce 1,504,471, and for General Scott 1,283,174."

Another peculiar arrangement of the American constitution sometimes brings about a similar anomalous result; we refer to that clause in virtue of which the Vice-President (an officer of very secondary consequence and note) steps into the presidential chair in case the President dies during his tenure of office. This has happened twice of late years. And when we add to the above circumstances the deplorable but very prevalent jealousy of great names and eminent ability which indisputably exists in the United States, we shall understand how it happens that the chief executive officer of a mighty nation is so often a man of feeble character, moderate talents, and infirm will,—why Clay, Calhoun, and Webster never could attain that post, and why, instead, it is bestowed upon such men as Tyler, Polk, Fillmore, and Pierce.

The third reason why, as we have stated, the American government cannot be regarded as a faithful representative or reliable exponent of the sentiments of the American nation, is to be found in the remarkable fact that the President may maintain his position and carry on the administration of affairs during his whole term of office, in direct opposition to the wishes of both Houses of the Legislature. The mode by which this singular result—a result certainly undesigned by the framers of the constitution—is brought about, is explained at some length by Mr. Tremenheere in his eleventh chapter. We cannot follow him in detail. We may, however, state briefly, that the anomaly is

effected partly by the presidential veto* on measures of Congress, —which veto is not, like ours, a dead letter, but has been exercised with success eleven times in sixty years, and by four, if not six, different Presidents—twice by Jackson, five times by Tyler, and thrice by Polk. Partly by the circumstance that the ministers, having no seats in Congress, are not under the necessity of defending their measures, and cannot therefore easily be driven from them. Partly, also, because "the vast patronage in the hands of the President enables him to cause the essential measures of the government to pass through Congress, and permits him to mould or to defer others which may not be in accordance with his policy. Thus he is able, though the general course of his policy may be disapproved of by both houses of legislature, to pass the supplies, and to wield for the term of his office the whole power of the government. This was the case with President Tyler, who was at variance with the senate during the whole course of his administration. And the latest and most notorious instance has only ceased with the last presidential election; the former President and his ministry having been of the whig party, and yet having succeeded in carrying on the government for four years in the face of a democratic majority against them, both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate."†

The subordinate executive officers throughout the Union partake of both the deficiencies we have noticed as belonging to their chief. Being elected by the masses, they naturally represent and enforce the sentiments and wishes of the masses, and not of the respectabilities or superiorities of the nation; and being elected by the masses—among whom are usually to be found the contraveners of the law—they are naturally feeble and backward in enforcing the law against them. Instances of this abound in nearly every State. Unpopular laws, regulations, and rights—even rights of property—are violated with impunity; the perpetrators of popular outrages are seldom brought to justice; sometimes even the executive authorities are themselves the perpetrators, encouragers, or apathetic spectators of these violations of justice and established rule. We will quote only two specimens:

"It is (says Mr. Chambers)‡ an unfortunate peculiarity in American railways, that certain States have adopted different gauges, so that a break necessarily takes place in passing from one to another. . . . One of these breaks took place at the town of Erie. The proprietors of the line being desirous to extend the New-York gauge through the adjoining part of Pennsylvania, and so make one break less in the length of railway, the people of Erie (where the break occurred) became alarmed

* It requires a vote of *two-thirds* of both houses to override a presidential veto.
† Tremenheere, Constitution of the United States, p. 172.
‡ Things as they are in America, p. 162.

at the prospect of trains passing through their town without stopping; and to prevent this calamity, *they tear up the rails as fast as they are laid down.* . . . Meanwhile, it is not the least curious and incomprehensible thing about the Erie outrages, that they are promoted by the mayor of the city, and are sympathised in by the governor of the State of Pennsylvania! . . . 'On Monday last (says the *New-York Tribune*), the railway across Sycamore Street, in Erie, was torn up about noon, *in obedience to the orders of the mayor.* . . . The sheriff of the borough was promptly on the ground, and did every thing in his power to prevent the track from being removed, *making an earnest appeal to those who were present to aid him in enforcing the laws*, and in preventing any infringement of the rights of the company. *The spectators, however, stood regardless of the appeal*, and permitted the *employés* of the mayor to proceed with their work.'"

The other case is more widely known and still more remarkable. It is that of the "Anti-Renters," as they are termed, in the state of New York. The first phase of it is thus narrated by Mr. George Combe in his *Notes on the United States* (iii. 194):

"The head of the Van Rensselaer family is styled the patroon of Albany, a title corresponding to the English lord of the manor. Many years ago, a large tract of land, lying on both sides of the Hudson, was let out on leases for long terms by one of the ancient patroons, for certain rents payable in grain, poultry, and services with carriages and teams. The late Mr. Van Rensselaer, who died in the present year, was indulgent in computing these rents, and he even allowed many of them to stand over unexacted.

His son is now insisting on the tenants paying up arrears, and he demands the modern market-price for both produce and services. The tenants consider their situation as at once anomalous and grievous. They are substantially proprietors of their farms; but their tenures are only leasehold: they conceive themselves also to suffer hardship in regard to the rates at which the produce is commuted. They have thought that the accession of the new patroon afforded a fitting opportunity to rid themselves of their grievances; and after offering him terms, which he declined to accept, they unanimously resolved not to comply with his demands. He appealed to the law, but they resisted the sheriff in serving legal writs upon them. The *posse comitatus* of Albany was called out, and they resisted them. The sheriff reported this resistance as rebellion to the governor of the state, and he issued a spirited proclamation, denouncing it as an outrage on the law, and called out the militia of the cities of Albany, Troy, and New York. The Albany and Troy militia marched into the disaffected territory. The insurgents seized the artillery and powder magazines belonging to their own militia regiments, obstructed the roads, and prepared for battle. The militia, however, pressed on, and showed a firm determination to support the law; on which the tenants surrendered at discretion, without any bloodshed."

The contest, however, was renewed; fresh appeals were made to the courts of law; the law upheld the rights of the patroon; the anti-renters refused to submit to the precepts of the law; and at last, after many years, ***succeeded in procuring a legal decision in their favour.*** But this fact, and the mode in which it was brought about, are symptoms of an even worse political malady than a weak executive. Through repeated changes in the constitution of the several states, the judges themselves have now become, in most parts, little better than echoes of the mass of the people—exponents, not of settled law, but of varying popular decrees.

We need not remind our readers that the independence of the judiciary has, in all times and countries and by all statesmen, been held to be the surest and most indispensable of securities for the rights and liberties of citizens, alike against the passions of a democracy or the encroachments and oppressions of the crown. This independence, as is obvious and has always been admitted, can only be preserved by having the judges appointed by the executive, irremovable during good conduct—*i.e.* appointed for life—and paid by salaries fixed and secured. By no one was the great principle more clearly seen or more strongly felt than by the founders of the American constitution; and, at the outset, not only the judges of the federal courts, but those of the several states, were appointed by the executive for life, and guarded alike against fear and favour by fixed and guaranteed emoluments. But that unhappy spirit which seems inherent in all pure democracies, in virtue of which any authority capable by its position and security of opposing or controlling the popular will—the existence of any official who is not a mere creature and slave of that will—is felt to be absolutely intolerable,—has overthrown this sole safeguard of freedom and justice;* and in the majority of the states the judges, like the members of legislature, are chosen by popular election, and for a term of years only—often a very short term. Like candidates for any other post, they *canvass*, treat, promise, and give pledges. Here is a manifesto issued by the candidate for the office of *attorney-general* in the state of New York, in reference to the very "anti-rent" question which was then pending:†

"I have been repeatedly applied to by individuals to know my opinions with regard to the manorial titles, and what course I intended

* The judges of the Supreme Court of the United States are still unelected and irremovable, but great efforts have been made to bring them also into dependence on the popular will. Jefferson, who more than any man is chargeable with the degradation of American institutions, recommended the abolition of their independence half a century ago.

† Johnston's Notes on North America, vol. ii. p. 291.

to pursue, if elected, in relation to suits commenced and to be commenced under the joint resolution of the senate and the assembly. I have uniformly replied to these inquiries that I regard the manorial titles as a public curse, which ought not to exist under a free government, and that if they can be broken up and invalidated by law it will give me great pleasure; and I shall prosecute the pending suits with as much vigour and industry as I possess, and shall commence others, if on examination I shall be satisfied there is the least possible chance of success. I regard these prosecutions as matters of public duty; and in this instance duty squares with my wishes and inclinations.

Nov. 2, 1849. L. S. CHATFIELD."

This was an address to the electing body, published as an advertisement in the newspapers. "Mr. Chatfield is now attorney-general (says Mr. Johnston); and I was informed that the known opinions of certain of the old judges on this exciting question was one of the understood reasons why they were not re-elected by popular suffrage, when, according to the new constitution, their tenure of office had expired."

So rapid has been, in respect to the judiciary, that degeneracy of American institutions of which we spoke at the commencement of this article, that in 1833, when Judge Story's great work was published, *five* of the twenty-five states then existing had adopted the principle of submitting the judges to the ordeal of a popular election, and appointing them only for a term of years; in 1844, when Judge Kent wrote his *Commentaries*, *twelve* out of twenty-nine states had taken this fatal step; and in 1853 the judges are elected in *twenty-five* states out of thirty-one;—in *twenty-two* of these they are appointed for short terms only; and in two others, though nominated by the governor, they are nominated for a term of years only. Many of these judges are elected annually, as in Connecticut, Vermont, Georgia. In many cases—indeed in most—they are elected for terms of years by universal suffrage. In Mississippi, by the Constitution of 1833, "*every* officer of the government, legislative, executive, and judicial, is elected by the universal suffrage of the people,—that is, by every free white male citizen of twenty-one years of age who has resided within the state for one year preceding. The judges of the Supreme Court of Errors and Appeals are thus chosen by districts for *six years*. The Chancellor is elected for *six* years by the *electors* of the whole state. The judges of the Circuit-courts are elected in districts for *four* years; the judges of probates and clerks of courts for *two*." *

It might have been expected that at least the two houses of legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives, would have been composed of the *élite* of the people, would have been

* Tremenheere, Const. of U. S., p. 272.

fair exponents of their spirit and views, would in fact have represented in a sufficient measure those classes which we have described as the mind, the soul, the "redeeming element" of the American *nation*, as contradistinguished from its mere numerical mass. But it is not so; it is decreasingly so:—and three principal reasons may explain this seeming anomaly.

In the first place, the elective franchise is no longer what it was when the federal constitution was formed and completed in 1789. The Senate, as is well known, is composed of members nominated by the state-legislatures, and the House of Representatives is chosen by the same electoral body as chooses the state-legislatures. The character of Congress, therefore, depends directly on the nature of the electoral body throughout the various states of the Union; and this body has been ceaselessly changing, and always approaching nearer and nearer to a pure ochlocracy.

"A greater and more grave departure (says Mr. Tremenheere)* from the theory of the constitution as it existed in the eyes and expectations of its careful and prudent founders, has taken place in the gradual lowering throughout nearly all the states of the Union, and the *entire abolition in two-thirds of them*, of those qualifications for the exercise of the franchise which existed when the constitution was adopted. Those qualifications were founded on property, on residence, on the payment of taxes; varying in degree in the different states, but all resting on one or other requirement as an essential principle of stability."

The following is Judge Kent's account of this downward progress:†

"The progress and impulse of popular opinion is rapidly destroying every constitutional check, every conservative element, intended by the sages who framed the earliest American constitutions as safeguards against the abuses of popular suffrage.

Thus in Massachusetts, by the constitution of 1780, a defined portion of real or personal property was requisite for an elector; that qualification was dispensed with by the amended constitution of 1821.

By the practice under the charters of Rhode Island and Connecticut, a property-qualification was requisite to constitute freemen and voters. This test is continued in Rhode Island, but was done away with in Connecticut by their constitution of 1818.

The New-York constitution of 1777 required the electors of the senate to be freeholders, and of the assembly to be either freeholders, or to have a rented tenement of the yearly value of forty shillings. The amended constitution of 1821 reduced this qualification down to payment of a tax, or performance of militia duty, or assessment and work on the highways. But the constitution as again amended in 1826 swept away all these impediments to universal suffrage.

* Const. of United States, p. 110.
† Comment. i. p. 227.

In Maryland, by their constitution of 1776, electors were to be freeholders, or possessing property to the amount of 30*l.*; but by legislative amendments in 1801 and 1809 (and amendments are allowed to be made in that state by an ordinary statute, if confirmed by the next succeeding legislature) all property-qualification was disregarded.

The constitution of Virginia in 1776 required the electors to be freeholders, but the constitution of 1830 reduced down the property-qualification to that of being the owner of a leasehold estate or a householder.

In Mississippi, by the constitution of 1817, electors were to have been enrolled in the militia, or paid taxes; but those impediments to universal suffrage were removed by the new constitution of 1833.

So the freehold-qualification, requisite in certain cases by the constitution of Tennessee of 1796, is entirely discontinued by the constitution of 1835.

In the states of Maine, Vermont, New York, Maryland, South Carolina, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Alabama, no property-qualification whatever, not even paying taxes, or serving in the militia, is requisite for the exercise of the right of suffrage. Every free male white citizen of the age of twenty-one years, and who shall have been a resident for some short given period, varying in those states from two years to three months, is entitled to vote.

To this enumeration the following states are now to be added: Florida, Texas, Wisconsin, Iowa, California; and finally, the once aristocratic state of Virginia, which on the 25th of October 1851 adopted the same ultra-democratic form of constitution as the states above named by a vote of 75,748 to 11,060 against it.

The following states have retained a semblance of a qualification:

In the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Georgia, Ohio, and Louisiana, the elector is required, in addition to age and residence, to have been assessed and paid; or in Ohio, 'charged' with a state or country tax; or in Connecticut to have served in the militia."

The operation of this rapid lowering of the suffrage, till it has, in fact, become unrestricted and universal, need not be pointed out in any detail. The more refined, cultivated, and reflecting classes—those capable of looking into the future, those competent to discern and to withstand the dangerous impulses of popular passion, those fitted to appreciate and discover the more valuable qualifications of a legislator—necessarily form a very small minority of the voters, and their influence is scarcely felt upon the poll-books. The numerical majority—a majority necessarily composed of the partially educated, the impulsive, and the unreflective—of men who read history and learn Great Britain through the medium of such text-books and such newspapers as we have already described—decide between the candidates for Congress; and those candidates, to be successful, mu

flatter the passions, pander to the prejudices, and adopt, or seem to adopt, the short and narrow views of the electors. The character of Congress is therefore gradually lowering, like the suffrage; and there is nothing indecorous in saying this, because it is notorious and avowed among the Americans themselves. Not only do the superior minds and spirits of the nation shrink from a game which involves so much that is rough, low, and dirty, but even where these would fain enter that arena, the populace of voters will rarely choose them. Of those who are chosen a great proportion cannot be exempted, it is certain, from the charge both of vulgarity and of corruptibility. We will say nothing of the language and behaviour frequently exhibited in Congress; this, however indicative of the class choosing and the class chosen, is, we are assured, looked upon with disgust and regret by all respectable Americans, as tending to lower them in the eyes of other nations. But what can be said of the charge of pecuniary influencibility, which is not only made, but believed, against American members of Congress, and by Americans themselves, and which has been admitted by implication in an act passed for its repression?* It is well known that both senators and representatives at Washington are *paid* eight dollars per working-day, with eight dollars for every twenty miles they have to travel. It is known also that this sum is insufficient to cover the expenses of living at Washington, and that many of the members are not men of independent private fortunes. "Hence it has arisen" (says Mr. Tremenheere), "and it is a matter too notorious in the United States to make any reluctance necessary in referring to it here, that accusations, without stint or measure, are launched against a considerable proportion of members of both houses of Congress, to the effect that, in order to make up such incomes as will enable them to live in the manner they think requisite, *they accept money-payments from persons interested in questions before the legislature*, to give their especial attention to such questions." Here is a speech of Colonel Benton, a noted senator in Congress, which, added to the existence of the "Act" just referred to, seems to place the matter beyond dispute. Indeed, we have heard of worse cases than those here described. The hon. senator says:

"The root of all this vicious legislation, and the opprobrium of our

* February 26, 1853. "Also in the matter of government contracts of all kinds, if common fame is to be depended upon, the amount of jobbing and corruption, especially in times of war, would astonish the acute parliamentary critics of our army and navy and miscellaneous estimates. It is asserted, that *one of the principal reasons why war is so popular in the United States* is the wide field it opens for these practices. The Florida and Mexican wars abounded in examples of them, some equalling any thing that could have occurred in the most corrupt period of our own government during the last century." Tremenheere, *Notes on Canada and the United States*, p. 125.

government, is a new power which has grown up at Washington, and which performs for legislation pretty much the same favour which caucuses and conventions perform for elections—that is, takes it out of the hands of the people's representatives, and puts it into the hands of self-constituted managers. These are the class of *agents*, now multiplied to scores, and organised into a body, *and supplied with the means of conciliating members* or combining interests. These guard the halls of legislation, and create interests strong enough to carry through bad measures, and to lay an embargo on the good, unless they consent to lend a helping-hand to the bad. I am told the way now to get any large bill through Congress for a claim, or a contract, or even a just grant of railroad-land, is to apply to one of these agents as the effective man (members of Congress being considered quite secondary), arrange with him, and, like a good grand-juryman, keep your own and your fellow's counsel. The great game of 'log-rolling'* then begins, and a mass of conglomerated measures pass easily, many of which could get no support alone. To lend a hand at a pinching vote—to get out of the way at a pinching vote—now becomes the duty of the *mollified* members. . . . It was the view of such proceedings as this that induced the representative from North Carolina to say that, 'with money enough, any bill might be carried through Congress.'"

The second cause of the deterioration and increasingly *non-representative* character of the members of the legislature is "the evil, which has been steadily gaining ground, of the whole machinery of the elections gradually falling into the hands of persons who devote themselves to the occupation of arranging them, of fixing upon and bringing forward candidates, of creating for them a name and character by means of unceasing eulogies in the public press, of dictating to them their policy, of describing to them, in its most minute details, the course which it is expected of them that they will take on all the leading questions before the public, whether of internal or external interest, and finally, when the elections have terminated in success, looking for their reward from the various sources within the means of the predominant political party, should their candidate happen to belong to it." It is difficult to exaggerate the ill-effect of this abuse in vitiating and lowering the choice of the electors; nor should we venture to state thus broadly the fact, were we not borne out to the letter by the assertions and complaints of the Americans themselves. It appears that, in the "primary elections," there are electioneering agents who go so far as to *contract for securing the majority* in this or that specified district or ward. The following "faithful and exact description of the system which is playing such fearful havoc with our institutions" is from the *New-York Herald:*

* "Log-rolling" means "Help me in my job, and I will help you in yours."

"A lazy fellow, who hates to work for a living, encouraged by the success of ward-politicians, who have grown fat upon the corruptions and the spoils of office, devotes his energies, day and night, to the acquisition of influence in the ward in which he resides. He spouts, he brawls in the bar-room, and affects public virtue of the highest order. He is a patriot of the first water, and a 'clever' fellow to boot. He treats the rowdies whenever he meets them, and makes them his fast friends. He is most diligent in attending to all matters of public interest connected with the ward or the city. If he has sufficient ability, he draws up resolutions for public meetings and committees, and studies the forms and precedents of political organisations, so that he has them at his fingers' ends, and he is consulted as an oracle upon all occasions of doubt, difficulty, or importance. If there is an honest man in the ward of the same politics, who has any taste or ambition for public affairs, and especially if he shows any talent, he takes every opportunity to blast his character, and calls him a traitor, an intriguer, a demagogue, or some other hard name. For the simple and confiding he promises to obtain situations in the post-office, the custom-house, and the police. He thus gradually acquires the influence he seeks, and soon finds himself a far more important man in the ward than his neighbour, who is a man of worth and respectability. His position is found out by those who want to use him. He is for sale to the highest bidder, either to defeat his own party by treachery, or to procure a nomination for any scoundrel who will pay for it. He has no politics of any kind. He has rascality to sell; and there are those who are willing to purchase it in order that they may traffic in it, and sell it themselves again at a very high profit. For instance, the agents of Fillmore, Scott, or Webster, come to one of these ward-politicians, and *make a contract with him to secure the majority in the ward.*"

A third cause operates still more powerfully in the same direction. The clause in the constitution which prevents ministers, even the heads of departments, from sitting in either House of Congress—though expressly designed to guard their public men from undue influence and corruption—has aided not only this very evil which it was designed to check, but several others likewise. It has lowered the character both of ministers and of representatives. A seat in the legislature and a seat in the cabinet mutually preclude each other. Capable and ambitious men must, therefore, resign one or other object of aspiration. Competent statesmen will not seek popular election, because it disqualifies for administrative power; and the President need not appoint the most capable statesmen as his ministers, because they are not exposed to the ordeal of parliamentary debates. Constituencies may choose representatives who are unfit to be ministers; and the President may appoint ministers who could not hold their ground as representatives. Some of the mischiefs of this system are thus tersely stated by Judge Story:*

* Commentaries, § 869, 870.

"Another reason for allowing the heads of departments seats in the legislature is, that it would compel the executive to make appointments for the high departments of government, *not from personal or private favourites,* but from statesmen of high public character, talents, experience, and elevated services—from statesmen who had already earned public favour, and could command public confidence." . . . . By the present law, "the heads of departments are in fact precluded from proposing or vindicating their own measures in the face of the nation, in the course of debate; and are compelled to intrust them to other men, who are either imperfectly acquainted with the measures, or are indifferent to their success or failure. Thus, that open and public responsibility for measures, which properly belongs to the executive in all governments, and especially in a republican government, as its greatest security and strength, is completely done away. *The executive is compelled to resort to secret and unseen influence,* to private interviews and private arrangements, to accomplish its own appropriate purposes; instead of proposing and sustaining its duties and measures by a bold and manly appeal to the nation in the face of its representatives."

The Americans might, in this matter, have learned wisdom from our practice. Shortly after the Revolution, in the reign of William III., repeated attempts were made to pass a bill excluding from parliament *all* men holding office under the crown. Happily, these attempts were not successful. Had they succeeded, the effect of the measure would have been what Mr. Macaulay has well described (*History of England,* iv. 338), and what we now see in America:

"About the manner in which such a bill should have been framed, there will, in our time, be little difference of opinion among enlightened Englishmen. They will agree in thinking that it will be most pernicious to open the House of Commons to all placemen, and not less pernicious to close that House against all placemen. To draw with precision the line between those who ought to be admitted and those who ought to be excluded, would be a task demanding much time, thought, and knowledge of details. But the general principles which ought to guide us are obvious. The multitude of subordinate functionaries ought to be excluded. A few functionaries who are at the head, or near the head, of the great departments of the administration, ought to be admitted. . . . . That men who are in the service and pay of the Crown ought not to sit in an assembly specially charged with the duty of guarding the rights and interests of the community against all aggression on the part of the Crown, is a plausible and a popular doctrine. Yet it is certain, that if those, who five generations ago held that doctrine, had been able to mould the constitution according to their wishes, *the effect would have been the depression of that branch of the legislature which springs from the people, and is accountable to the*

people, and the ascendency of the monarchical and aristocratical elements of our polity. The government would have been entirely in patrician hands. The House of Lords, constantly drawing to itself the first abilities in the realm, would have become the most august of senates, while the House of Commons would have sunk almost to the rank of a vestry. From time to time, undoubtedly, men of commanding genius and of aspiring temper would have made their appearance among the representatives of the counties and boroughs. But every such man would have considered the elective chamber merely as a lobby through which he must pass to the hereditary chamber. The first object of his ambition would have been that coronet without which he could not be powerful in the state. As soon as he had shown that he could be a formidable enemy and a valuable friend to the government, he would have made haste to quit what would then have been in every sense the lower house, for what would then have been in every sense the upper. The conflict between Walpole and Pulteney, the conflict between Pitt and Fox, would have been transferred from the popular to the aristocratic part of the legislature. On every great question, foreign, domestic, or colonial, the debates of the nobles would have been impatiently expected, and eagerly devoured. The report of the proceedings of *an assembly containing no person empowered to speak in the name of the government, no person who had ever been in high political trust, would have been thrown aside with contempt. Even the control of the purse of the nation must have passed, not perhaps in form, but in substance, to that body in which would have been found every man who was qualified to bring forward a budget, or explain an estimate.* The country would have been governed by peers; and the chief business of the commons would have been to wrangle about bills for the enclosing of moors and the lighting of towns."

Be the causes what they may, the fact of the deterioration in quality and character of American statesmen cannot be denied. It stares us in the face as we look back to history. It is painfully forced upon our conviction by every debate in Congress and every American state-paper we peruse. It is admitted by Americans themselves. It is deplored by every foreigner who admires them, and loves that liberty of which they and we are the chief champions, and ought to be the chief ornaments and illustrators. "Il est évident (says M. de Tocqueville) que la race des hommes-d'état américains *s'est singulièrement rapetissée* depuis un demi-siècle."* "Consider for one moment," writes an American of eminence,† "the inevitable effects of our present style of politics. *The quality of our politicians deteriorates most rapidly.* Write down a list of the twenty-five leading politicians of Washington's, Adams's, or Jefferson's administrations, and write opposite the names of our foremost twenty-five. . . . . Have we not among our very foremost 'statesmen' illiterate, shallow, noisy, boast-

* Démocratie en Amérique, ii. c. 5. † Tremenheere, Const. of U. S. p. 151.

ful demagogues? . . . . It seems to me that the business of politics is getting to be done more and more by such persons; and that men of worth, dignity, and wisdom more and more abstain from that political pitch which defiles; and that the apathy of the intelligent class with regard to politics has become almost complete."

Closely connected with this fact, and probably among its chief causes, is another, which it behoves this country to reflect upon with grave attention. *Public questions as well as public men have become small in the Union.* Now the history of all free states would seem to indicate that the strife of great parties, divided upon great questions, is the very life of liberty and progress. It keeps talent, character, patriotism, all at a high level. When, by the entire victory of one of these parties and the entire subjection of the other, or by the settlement and shelving of all these grand questions, this strife is ended, ideas, passions, and interests alike dwarf and dwindle, and the contest which must always exist becomes one simply for the possession of power,—one between individuals instead of between principles; and the questions in the name and under the cloak of which it is carried on become both insignificant and artificial. Now the great strife of all—the most enduring and the most universal—that between Conservatism and Democracy—between those who would restrict and those who would extend the popular power—no longer rages in America. It died with the defeat of the FEDERALISTS when Jefferson became President; and from that hour dates the deterioration we have spoken of. As long as that party and that struggle lasted, America was rich in great men—Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Munroe, Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams; when that party and that struggle ended, we come down to the Jacksons, the Taylors, the Van Burens, the Polks, the Marcys, the Cushings, and the Pierces.

Two great questions still exist, or rather may arise, out of which great parties, divided on great principles and contending for great interests, may yet be formed—Slavery, and Conquest. The first is one which for magnitude and difficulty is assuredly worthy to occupy and exercise the most powerful intellects of any nation, and sooner or later, if not solved in time, will menace the stability of the Union, and so force itself into political prominence. Late events would appear to indicate that the period for this is drawing very near. But hitherto politicians of all parties have, by a sort of tacit consent, endeavoured to avoid the discussion of it, and to keep it out of the arena of congressional discussions. Though often agitating the whole Union, it h been regarded rather as a social and moral than as a poli question, and has occupied enthusiasts rather than r

Whenever the question of the continuance and extension, or the condemnation and abolition, of this domestic institution shall be erected into the banner of a great party, shall become THE topic which combines and divides politicians, and shall make its battle-field the two Houses of Congress, then American statesmen, breathing a purer atmosphere, fighting in a noble cause, vehement with earnest passion, and giving utterance to lofty sentiments, may once more grow great. Or a similar salvation may be achieved whenever a party shall arise bold, strong, wise, and virtuous enough to take its stand on the principle of opposition to that insane, intoxicating, reckless spirit of conquest, rapine, and annexation which is fast transforming the great Republic of peace and freedom into a mere freebooting, spoliating, bullying aggressor. But, alas! this spirit seems to possess the whole nation,—or at least such an omnipotent majority, that the very endeavour to oppose it would be equivalent to the suicide of the daring and impotent dissentients. So that in place of great parties contending in the name of liberation and humanity, or of justice and peace, we have a set of petty factions, whose very number and names read like a satire and a reproach,—Hunkers, Barn-burners, Loco-focos, Know-nothings, Hard-shells, Soft-shells, Woolly-heads, Dough-faces, and others,—and nearly all of them struggling not for principle but for place and pelf.

Are we, in this country, secure against a corresponding though a mitigated danger? We have disposed of all the great questions which have been the battle-fields of party during the two centuries in the course of which our constitution and our grandeur have been rising. Principles are settled: details only remain for discussion. Even Conservatism has become as reforming as Liberalism. Religious liberty, Parliamentary reform, Free-trade, have become historic matters: our foreign policy alone remains undecided as to its fundamental points. As the differences between contending politicians become more minute and insignificant, will not the great game of politics tend almost irresistibly to grow less worthy and less noble? Shall we not have to be magniloquent and passionate over puny trifles? Will not parties dwindle into factions? And will not their quarrel be, not whither or on what tack the vessel shall be steered, but what favourite orator shall hold the helm?

Let us look at the confirmation of our sketch of America by one of the most penetrating and profound observers a quarter of a century ago:

"Great political parties are not, then, to be met with in the United States at the present time. Parties, indeed, may be found which threaten the future tranquillity of the Union; but there are none which seem to contest the present form of government, or the present

course of society. The parties by which the Union is menaced do not rest upon abstract principles, but upon temporal interests. These interests, disseminated in the provinces of so vast an empire, may be said to constitute rival nations rather than parties. Thus, upon a recent occasion, the north contended for the system of commercial prohibition, and the south took up arms in favour of free trade, simply because the north is a manufacturing, and the south an agricultural district; and because the restrictive system which was profitable to the one was prejudicial to the other. In the absence of great parties, the United States abound with lesser controversies; and public opinion is divided into a thousand minute shades of difference upon questions of very little moment. The pains which are taken to create parties are inconceivable, and at the present day it is no easy task. In the United States there is no religious animosity, because all religion is respected, and no sect is predominant; there is no jealousy of rank, because the people is every thing, and none can contest its authority; lastly, there is no public misery to serve as a means of agitation, because the physical position of the country opens so wide a field to industry, that man is able to accomplish the most surprising undertakings with his own native resources. Nevertheless, ambitious men are interested in the creation of parties, since it is difficult to eject a person from authority upon the mere ground that his place is coveted by others. The skill of the actors in the political world lies, therefore, in the art of creating parties. A political aspirant in the United States begins by discriminating his own interest, and by calculating upon those interests which may be collected around, and amalgamated with it; he then contrives to discover some doctrine or some principle which may suit the purposes of the new association, and which he adopts in order to bring forward his party, and to secure its popularity; just as the *imprimatur* of a king was incorporated with the volume which it authorised, but to which it nowise belonged. When these preliminaries are terminated, the new party is ushered into the political world. All the domestic controversies of the Americans at first appear to a stranger to be so incomprehensible and so puerile, that he is at a loss whether to pity a people which takes such arrant trifles in good earnest, or to envy that happiness which enables it to discuss them."*

We had intended to speak at some length of the character and influence of the press in the United States; but we have left ourselves no space to do so. That press, unfortunately, represents and expresses the enlightened and intelligent minority of the NATION just as little as do the government and the members of Congress; and for the same reason. American newspapers are numberless and low-priced. They are not *cheap*—regard being had to the character of their contents (even Mr. Chambers admits this); but they are sold often for a halfpenny, oftener for a penny, and are therefore within the reach of nearly every one. Five-sixths of the matter they contain is advertisement;

* Tocqueville, Démocratie en Amérique.

the remaining sixth (if we put out of view a few, a very few honourable exceptions) is about equally divided between home personalities, often deplorably low in language, and abuse or depreciation of England. This character is traceable to two sources: "the facility with which they can be set on foot gluts the market (says Mr. Tremenheere), and reduces the profits to so low a point that very few men of ability and character will condescend to embark in that species of occupation." Then, being so low in price as to be purchasable by the mass of the population, they are addressed to that mass, and written so as to gratify it. They "who live to please, must please to live." The vast majority of them, therefore, almost as an inevitable consequence, pander to the prejudices and inflame the passions of the average body of readers,—a body which, in America, embraces nearly the whole working-classes. The consequences of this, present and prospective, are very serious indeed. "Unfortunately, our own press not uncommonly presents examples of a mode of comment on what it disapproves in the conduct of the American government and people, the caustic satire of which burns deeper than the arguments. Every disparaging word is caught at, and its import magnified; and every sarcasm, from whatever quarter,—in book or pamphlet, speech or newspaper,—is quoted and requoted for years as proofs of the bad disposition of the English people towards every thing American."

The following observations,* written above four years ago, well deserve attention on both sides of the water at the present conjuncture:

"In the mean time that democratic press is occupied in nursing the popular ambition by holding forth the doctrine that it is the 'manifest destiny' of the American people to absorb the whole continent, and its adjoining islands. It stirs up the warlike spirit which pervades the whole country; it systematically teaches them to undervalue the power of England, and to look upon her as weak and declining; and it inspires them with an evident desire to try their strength with Great Britain, in the confident expectation that it would give them very little trouble to lay her prostrate. That during the excitement on the Cuban affair, of which I had good opportunities of watching the course, the democratic press should pour forth even more than its usual quantity of declamation in its endeavour to stir up the passions and promote the objects above adverted to, might be expected; but I confess I did not expect to see so many of the Whig papers at that time fall into the same tone. The conduct of some few of them was manly and honourable. They resisted from the first the popular impulse towards that unprincipled aggression. But it was lamentable and of evil augury to read, in other papers of that party, leading articles, the premises of which were for, and the conclusions against, that act of piracy; sen-

* Tremenheere, Notes on Public Subjects, p. 134.

tences one day condemning the offender, yet defending the offence; another day sentences taking the opposite line, and so written as to be quoted as proofs of consistency should the turn of events render the 'cry for Cuba' an available one at the next elections. The trimming of some of the Whig papers during several weeks displayed as complete a want of principle as the aggression, and a less amount of determination than the democratic papers exhibited in their bold and unscrupulous adoption of it from the beginning. . . . .

This high opinion of themselves, and low estimate of other powers, which pervades, I believe, the numerical mass of the people of the United States, renders it by no means improbable that they may at any moment, in a period of popular excitement, hurry along the upper and more sober-minded classes of the community, and their government, into a course of national policy which those classes might in reality condemn, but which they would have no power to arrest or alter. Such an instance, to refer to no others, occurred in the case of the Mexican war, which was condemned by all their best statesmen, and against which they were warned in the most earnest manner by nearly all that deserved to exercise any moral weight in the community. But the popular current was too strong for them, and they were finally led to acquiesce in what they could not prevent; one imprudent step of the government, in risking a small body of troops in an exposed position, having been held to commit irretrievably both government and people. Such periods of popular excitement must be expected to recur at no very great intervals, where their causes fall in with the principles of a large, not to say preponderating body in the state; where so many eager expectants are ever on the watch to profit by them; and where an unscrupulous press is ever at hand to mislead the popular mind, and to play upon the excitable temperament of the people.

When such occasions arise, I believe there is no more effectual mode of keeping the peace than to show unmistakably to those persons who pull the wires of these popular excitements, that there is no weakness in the counsels of Great Britain, nor any failing in the strength of her arm, if need be, to sustain them. Those persons, indeed, know full well, that no more than a minute fraction of that strength was ever put forth in the unfortunate collisions that have hitherto taken place between Great Britain and the United States. The great mass of their readers are profoundly ignorant of that fact. It will not be the fault of these newspaper-writers, if their fellow-countrymen are not some day rather roughly awakened to their error."

Looking back over the whole matter, and endeavouring to look back upon it dispassionately, we must avow that our anticipations are by no means sanguine or pleasing, whether as regards the improvement and elevation of American policy or the permanence of the existing American Union. On both subjects we cannot help sharing to the utmost those sad and gloomy fears which we know to fill the minds of many of the most thoughtful

and far-seeing Americans themselves, and which appear in every page of Judge Story's writings. We see few elements of amendment, and many of deterioration. We entertain only the faintest hopes that the Union will last another generation. We are not sure that we feel any earnest desire that it should. A state whose power was so vast, while its political morality and wisdom were so low, would be of ill augury to the well-being of the rest of the world. The official avowals, plain or thinly disguised, of Mr. Fillmore and Mr. Pierce, of intended territorial aggrandisement; and the language of Mr. Everett, when secretary of state, as to the impossibility of resisting the conquering and filibustering tendencies of American citizens,—to say nothing of the orations delivered in both Houses of Congress,—leave little prospect of arresting a career of aggression and injustice, which, as the extension of slavery and the preponderance of slave-states are among its chief motives, cannot be tamely acquiesced in by the north. The New-England states, New York and Philadelphia, will not choose long to be dragged through national iniquities of which the object and effect must be to give a preponderance to their southern rivals. Sooner or later issue must be joined on this question. And when the north and the south shall separate, the west will not choose to be linked to the destinies of either. Besides this, as every year extends the boundaries of the United States, admits new territories into its fold, complicates its interests, multiplies the questions and increases the perplexities with which its statesmen have to deal,—statesmen of greater ability, experience, character, and commanding grasp of mind are required to deal with concerns of such ever-growing magnitude. The politicians fit to manage the national affairs of a Republic reaching from Maine to Mexico must be few and rare indeed! Yet every year fills the halls of Congress and the Presidential chair with men of briefer training, shallower capacity, and lower, because more popular, views of statesmanship and public morals. A task tenfold greater than that which was a sore weight to Washington and Adams is laid upon the shoulders of a Pierce, a Marcy, and a Cass. As matters become more delicate, more difficult, and more perilous, a poorer, a feebler, and a rasher set rush in to handle them. *What* must be "the end of these things," it needs no prophet to foretell. *When* that end may come, we are not anxious to conjecture.

In conclusion: the remarks which we have made above as to the non-representative character of the government and the press of the United States may suffice to suggest the line of conduct to be adopted by this country on those occasions when, as recently, endeavours are made, for personal or party purposes,

by American officials to fix a quarrel on Great Britain, and when those endeavours are disavowed and condemned by the classes whom we have ventured to designate as constituting *par excellence* the American NATION. We must assume, as far as possible, a passive and impassive attitude; ignoring all that we are suffered to ignore; hearing nothing that we are not compelled to hear; taking no notice of provocative speeches in Congress or bombastic articles in newspapers, which, though spoken and written *at* us, are not addressed *to* us; and heeding, as little as we can in courtesy, Presidential and State documents which, though addressed *to* us, are written and spoken *at* Americans and for American political designs. We must pass by all insults in mere words, as not the deliberate language of national organs, but only the bluster of men untrained to statesmanlike decorum or refined courtesy, whom temporary accident has raised to high positions. If they proceed to acts, we must meet and repel them with the quiet repression becoming men who feel that they are dealing with antagonists as much blamed by the nation in whose name they act, and whose power they abuse, as by the nation whom they gratuitously assail. We must be especially on our guard against identifying the Washington officials, whose term of office is expiring, with the permanent PEOPLE of America; and we must be careful, by no angry or intemperate language of ours directed against that people, to lead them to make common cause with their temporary and mischief-making rulers.

> "Stand we firm and resolute,
> Like a forest—close and mute,
> With folded arms, and looks which are
> Weapons of unvanquish'd war.
>
> With folded arms and steady eyes,
> And little fear, and less surprise,
> Look upon them as they stay
> Till their rage has died away."

We are aware that it is never an easy thing, and not always either a decorous or a possible one, thus to separate a nation from its government, especially when that government is ostensibly and pre-eminently the creature of the popular choice. Nevertheless in this case we must do it, and the notorious facts of the case justify us in doing it. And before laying down the pen, we wish to forestall a possible misunderstanding and a probable charge. We have no desire, and have had no intention, to speak with disrespect of that portion—the numerical majority—of the American people which *does* elect the legislative and administrative officers of the United States, and whose sentiments, therefore, those officers may fairly be assumed to speak. Towards this majority —the actual electoral body—we *feel* no disrespect. They are

no worse than the corresponding class in our own country; on the contrary, in many respects they are better. They are less docile, modest, and respectful, certainly; but they are more intelligent, more shrewd, more intensely energetic, and, as a rule, far better educated. The difference between the two countries is this: in the United States this class of men *govern;* in England they do not. In the United States the government is elected, the national tone is given, the standard of public morality is fixed by the *mass,* the operatives, the tradesmen, the pioneers of the West, the cultivators of the soil, the lower professional electioneerers—by those, in fact, who correspond to what are termed the middle and lower classes in settled countries. In England the government is chosen, the national tone is given, the standard of public morality is fixed by the middle and upper classes—the educated minority, the merchants, the aristocracy, the thinkers, and the writers. If our parliament and our ministers were named, as in America, by universal suffrage and for brief periods, what sort of men would rise to the head of affairs with us? How long should we preserve even that modified degree of moderation, decorum, wisdom, and public purity which still prevails among our Transatlantic cousins?

Art. VIII.—THE AUSTRIAN PEACE.

The Moniteur of the 2d of February 1856.

Those who still consider—according to a view at one time current among liberal politicians—that a state of war must necessarily be full of passionate impulses,—some of them sufficiently generous, but others, and those perhaps the most practically influential, of a widely different character,—must feel no little surprise at the mode in which the question of peace and war is now discussed. That it is not contemplated through any distorting medium of ambition or revenge is certain, and may to many appear to be a fact of unmixedly cheerful augury. The received imagery is at fault. The picture on the mental retina is not of ardent warriors meeting with hateful eyes—a bloody field—spent combatants—a foe struck down—and a peace dictated by the victor; nor, on the other hand, do we see a vision of aims lost sight of, and hopes disappointed on all sides—a return to a mere *status quo,* with the addition of universal weariness and disgust—the unsatisfactory outcome of a series of inconsistent and transitory alliances and combinations, topped by

some dexterous move acquiesced in by all as giving the finishing-stroke to a game which has been deprived of its higher interests, and only needs to be ended, and, if possible, forgotten. The latter is a result so much to be apprehended in all wars where complex interests are at stake, that a conviction of our being at all events spared that ought possibly to awaken in humble and reasonable minds a more lively feeling of satisfaction and thankfulness than we find ourselves able to avow. The war and the negotiations have progressed with something like the steady march of a Chancery-suit, in which the plaintiff has gained some new point at each stage, and the antagonists have been strictly kept by the court to the issues raised in their preliminary altercation. Diplomacy can state its successive feats in parallel columns, and make up its record of a statesman's war by appending a scientific award, drawn up in all clerkly neatness by untrembling hands—a monument of practice, a precedent for future learners.

Yet, is this safe, calm, judicial procedure,—this legal, precise operation,—all that a great war and its close ought to be? Is the feeling of disappointment, of shortcoming, of dissatisfaction with nicely-elaborated expedients, which we believe to be tolerably universal in England, either immoral or even mistaken? If the Austrian pacification is completed, will its annals be the very best contribution that ever was made to the historic food which nourishes the souls of nations? Be it observed, that if the maxims at present in vogue among statesmen are really the maturest fruits of political wisdom and virtue, then this peace (supposing it to include the greater number of the points understood to be contended for by the Allies) must be a model peace. It cannot be looked on merely as an inevitable solution, or a wise practical mode of reconciling conflicting difficulties. It must be a type in its way—a pattern for the world—a specimen of the best that Christian civilisation has yet been able to effect; it must consecrate the admission that the knightly sword has no more work to do, and that international rights may henceforward be safely left to the vindication of the policeman's staff.

The maxims to which we refer are briefly reducible to two: first, that appeals to the nobler and deeper passions of mankind —to the enthusiasm for liberty and to the throbbings of patriotism—are so dangerous that they should be left to the last, and only made under the stress of inexorable necessity; and secondly, that wars should be confined to the removal of the immediate *casus belli*, and not be allowed to extend to any effectual dealing with the remoter causes of the wrongs complained of. No one can doubt that these maxims have been stated by the most influential persons more broadly than it is customary in

political life to state abstract principles, or that the war has been conducted, and the terms of peace framed, in a spirit of *doctrinaire* accordance with what is so laid down. Even on the first head, we cannot in any manner admit that the expressions used by our statesmen are to be considered as limited to the special circumstances. Their whole *animus* has been unmistakably to sneer down, with the keen superciliousness of age and experience, every generous allusion, every argument based on other than material considerations. Poland is not to be spoken of as a monument of oppression—a standing witness to the fraud and violence of an encroaching power—a thorn in the side of Russia, because a conquest from a noble and injured race, but at most as a "menace to Germany." The word "nationality" excites a titter, as representing the fixed idea of monomaniacs; an irrelevant Quixotism, to be put down by naming it in a disparaging tone; a disturbing element, imported by a few presumptuous sciolists into the consultations of men of business. There is an unseemly proneness in persons of station all round to get rid of any thing like a reference to large principles by stamping those who venture to allude to them as "visionary."

What we except to in the language of statesmen respecting the mode in which this war has been carried on is, that they seem to consider the very limitation of its aims, the very smallness of the reparation exacted from a powerful and unscrupulous enemy of freedom and civilisation, to be evidences not of our weakness but of his. They forget that it does not really extend the pale of law to deal with those without it as leniently as if they were within it, and only needed, from time to time, the mild surveillance of constituted authorities. It may be *necessary* to stop at this point. The fears of a despotic ally abroad, or of a timid aristocracy at home, may make it impossible to go further; but, in the name of all that is worth living for, let not the final sacrifice of Poland, the respite granted to Austria, the abandonment of Circassia, the inadequacy of the protection given to the Baltic powers, the sufferance of a continued state of defencelessness in Germany, be held forth as proofs of respect for international law, and of the systematic judicial way in which Europe, conscious of her own strength, is contented with magnificently putting aside an aggressor who must henceforward be subject to her tribunals.

It is difficult to argue for that faith in liberty and in national rights which it is now so much the fashion to disparage. Those who feel it can but say so boldly, and help all in high places who will echo their convictions. It is disheartening, sickening, to observe how much credit for worldly wisdom is gained by the adoption of a sceptical tone on the subject. If, however,

such language were held by a generation great in all the arts of government, able adapters of means to ends, masterly realisers of narrow ideas, some respect for the hard efficiency of the sceptics might create a moment's presumption in their favour, and damp the ardour of their opponents. But when it is held by ministers and parliaments whose sole strength is in good intention, and who can lay no claim to the attributes of that cold politic intellect which they affect, those in whom the memory of the heroic ages of the world is still fresh must be forgiven some lack of deference for the wise saws of their monitors.

The same narrow legal spirit which holds it much gain to abstain from awaking great passions prides itself also on restricting the objects of a contest to the removal of the original *casus belli*. This is another fallacious application of the maxims that obtain within the limits of law to the region which lies without those limits. The test of a law-governed community is, that the least wrong, no less than the greatest, can be redressed on the application of the injured party. You have not to wait for an accumulation of such wrongs. Since your causes of complaint may be removed as they arise, it is your own fault if you invoke no aid till half your patrimony is gone. You cannot complain if the state, when set in motion at last, addresses itself simply to the removal of your latest grievance, and declines to open inquiries which you have waived by acquiescence. It is far otherwise in the half-organised commonwealth of States. There the immediate injury is the least part of the matter. If it is the first, little will be done to avenge it. The iteration and pertinacity of outrage must precede the retributive stroke, open the eyes of all parties to its necessity, and give them time for reflection and preparation.

There is no ground whatever for the pharisaical complacency with which the narrowing of the present war to the direct protection of Turkey is viewed. The gist of the war is the effort to check the systematic aggressions of an oriental despotism, wielding many of the resources of Western civilisation far more effectively than the Western nations themselves, upon the East of Europe. The geographical position of Turkey, and her supposed weakness, seemed to render her at once the most important and the most attainable prize; and her danger aroused other states at last to interpose against Russia, when Russia was fast approaching the completion of her designs. It had been a mistake to sanction the appropriation of Finland, an instance of glaring incapacity to allow "the disastrous treaty of Adrianople," a crime to connive at the annihilation of Poland, a blunder and a blindness (to say the least) to permit Russian intervention in Hungary; but peril to the Queen of the Bosphorus was too much even for

the statesmen of a forty years' peace. This last-mentioned peril, being too great and too obvious to be passed over, became the immediate cause of war; and yet its significance and its danger depended on a succession of events spread over a previous century. It might have been no more than the occupation of a good commercial station by a civilised power instead of an effete barbarism, and a benefit rather than a danger to the rest of Europe. Why are the integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire become so important to us, bound up as they now are with the last hopes of the countrymen of John Sobieski? Not as the beginning, but as the consummation of Russian encroachment. We know not any rule of morals or of policy which requires us to rejoice in the terms of peace being limited to the prevention of the final iniquity. We see no grounds for self-righteous exultation in the fact that we have not sought to dismember or to degrade the empire of the Czars. We can only see that, having deferred action too long, we are obliged to content ourselves with staving off the last danger, and to put up with insufficient securities obtained at the price of gigantic efforts.

Will Europe derive such an amount of security from the results of the present war, if now brought to a close, as might fairly and reasonably be expected? We cannot think that it will. We subscribe to the condemnation which has been passed by others on the cant phrase, that a great country should not wage a little war. The proper answer to it is to quote Johnson's line on the subject of driving fat oxen. But the results of a *great* war should be of commensurate importance. The agencies which it sets in motion are too vast and too rarely available, as well as too solemn and too grievous, to be used without extracting from them all the good that they can yield. We should not lay down our arms in such a war merely because we have got what will do, if something that will do better is within our reach. In virtue of the precious blood which has been spilt, it is the right of the combatant to run some risks in order to complete his work.

The Eastern danger arises from two causes: the aggressive spirit of Russia, and the weakness of Central Europe. We are aware that some whose opinions are entitled to respect deny the existence of the first. They rely on the quiet acquisitive character said to belong to the middle classes there as here, and are content to await the progress of commerce and the growth of riches as sufficient antidotes to the ambition of the house of Romanoff. To us this appears a most uncertain speculation. What we really know is, that ever since the Czars have lived at St. Petersburg they have pursued one undeviating course of aggression with a united nation at their backs. They have not

been provoked to it by the attacks of their neighbours, allured to it by the exigencies of their commerce, or impelled to it by the pressure of barbarous tribes seeking a livelihood and settling down into quiet citizens when they have found it. Whatever travellers may report of the inoffensive talk and habits of the *bourgeoisie*, history teaches—is teaching at this very moment—that the habitual condition of the country is to follow an ambitious and grasping Czar with a kind of religious enthusiasm and faith in destiny. We take a long run of events to be the best evidence of the real tendencies of a nation, and lay little stress on the psychological deductions of travellers. But if we attached more weight than we do to these latter, our opinion would for practical purposes remain unaltered. It will not do to reason as if the house of Romanoff were now for the first time trying their 'prentice hands at the career of ambition, in the face of a rapid increase of commercial tendencies all over the globe. The question is not of founding but of completing their edifice. The arid plains of the interior are passed. The Russian frontier is within a few days' march of Vienna. The next step, if it is ever made, will add wealth and luxury to a barbaric empire, which has already reached the limits of mere barbaric conquest. Moreover, the Romanoffs are not in the main rash or foolhardy people. In the present instance they have miscalculated; but generally they bide their time, invade countries ready for their yoke, and keep what they overrun. They have corn and wine and cattle within their own boundaries, and endless capacities for subsisting a vast population. Proprietors may be distressed by the compulsory enlistment of their serfs, and may be rendered unable to purchase the luxuries furnished by the manufacturing nations; but Russia does not rely at bottom on her foreign commerce, or the money which foreign commerce brings. She will not quake, her monarchs will not tremble in their citadels, on account of monetary crises, although the want of pecuniary resources may from time to time induce a pause, as at present. She can afford to move slowly. She need only ask at each pause to be allowed to remain where she is. That too large a part of what she asks in this respect will be granted now is the unsatisfactory feature in the approaching pacification.

Turn now to the second source of weakness—the condition of Central Europe. What do we find there? In the north the straggling kingdom of Prussia, the rival of Austria, at present the stanch friend of Russia, and by reason of her anomalous boundaries presumably bent on consolidating her own territory at the expense of her southern neighbours; in the middle, the battle-fields of Europe; in the south, shivering, bankrupt, po-

lice-ridden Austria, the Fouché of states, ready to play the jackal to any great power which will abet her in corrupting and enslaving the population of that Danube valley which holds so much of the youngest blood of Europe. No one can deny these facts; no one can deny the dangers which they imply; and yet, strange to say, those are called "visionary" who would have their bearing on the Russian war duly considered.

The Russian war, we admit, did not directly involve the reconstruction of Central Europe; but the position of affairs at the close of the last campaign would have justified every effort to remove those pressing dangers which impend over it *on the side of Russia*. One object was to invite Prussia to pursue her own aggrandisement by incarnating the liberal tendencies of Northern Germany, and by presenting herself as an independent and progressive power, able and willing to realise the best aspirations of German nationality. Another object was, to throw Austria on the task of really conciliating her subjects north of the Alps. The way to accomplish both would have been to destroy Russian domination in Poland.

We are alive to the difficulties and dangers of such an attempt. We are aware that to make it would have been to some extent to walk by faith rather than by sight. We do not forget that if a peace is practically concluded before these pages see the light, we shall be open to the reproach of discussing schemes no longer placed within the choice of politicians. But our object here, as throughout this article, is to give voice to the widely-diffused feeling, which we share to the utmost, that the contemplated peace will be unsatisfactory, because the tone of public men gives us no assurance that its shortcomings are unavoidable. This feeling must be expressed with all plainness, for England cannot relapse into indifference to foreign affairs; and a new and more worthy policy ought to be inaugurated by a healthier and better-educated popular sentiment. We have already expressed our conviction that it would have been a wise audacity to attempt to regenerate Poland. Our belief that it could have been done has been fully confirmed by recent events. Looking to Russia's antecedents, we cannot believe that her actual disasters, balanced as they were by some successes, would alone have induced her to sue for peace. Some blow nearer to the heart of her power must have been felt to be approaching. The threat of an invasion of Poland must have determined her submission. Such a threat must have had a double force. Russia must have felt, on the one hand, that its execution would annihilate the schemes of Peter and of Catherine; she must have felt also, that to avoid the danger by making peace would probably insure her dominion in Poland for ever. We have admitted that there

would have been some audacity in the stroke; but that fact seems decisive as to its necessity. If the national light is now flickering in its socket, where will it be twenty-five years hence, if the interval is employed in the deportation of the patriotic, the corruption of the nobles, and the relief of the serfs? Poland will then, in good truth, be "a menace to Germany," and Russia may find rich consolation for the loss of a navy, in having troops at Vienna ready to meet her on the Bosphorus when she marches to it through the rich provinces of Asia Minor. The greater risk has been run, in order to avoid the less. The make-shift policy has been followed. The smallest possible sacrifice of vested interests has been preferred to the righting of great wrongs, and the removal of pressing dangers; and that too when (humanly speaking) *the last opportunity* was presented. Why is all this? Is it only owing to the difficulties of the French Emperor? If it be so, a large share of our own responsibility is removed; but his calculations must have been largely affected by the spirit in which English ministers have looked at public affairs. Their words and their acts (not now only, but in the year 1848, when the game was much more in our hands than it is now) persuade us that they have been actuated by that baneful system of motives summed up in the polite phrase, "consideration for the situation of Austria." The worst conservatism—the conservatism of abuses and of shams; the worst policy—the policy of the ostrich when it hides its head in the sand; the worst morality—the morality which seeks to cheat the devil in the dark; the worst caution—the caution which ever turns the eye of mistrust and jealousy to the upright and generous side; every form of political cowardice, faithlessness, and hollowness, is implied in that fatal Austrian leaning which disfigures our whole policy. There are elements of barbaric grandeur in Russia, and universal empire is, after all, a regal dream; but Austria's prayer is but to be let alone, to work evil, to destroy freedom, to corrupt public virtue, to fetter thought, to enslave conscience, and to maintain an uneasy supremacy by fomenting the discords of her own wretched subjects, pitting one against another, and, if need be, setting each to slaughter his neighbour.

> Labra movet, metuens audiri: Pulchra Laverna,
> Da mihi fallere, da justo sanctoque videri;
> Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem.

That this is an Austrian peace, concocted by Austria, promoted by Austria, to be followed by a closer alliance between Austria and France, is enough in itself to awaken every suspicion of its real adequacy.

The world can hardly see a more anomalous and mischievous

position than that now occupied by Austria. Her aspects are so multifarious, the elements of her strength and her weakness are so complex, that the only thing which can at all times be safely predicated of her is, that she may at any time be convulsed and rendered dependent. At the same time, her weakness cannot be reckoned on. Her opportunities of throwing a weight into the political scales are far too great to be intrusted to a nation presenting no moral guarantees for independence. Every state whose mission it is to hold keys and to maintain limits (Savoy-Piedmont, in the wars of the seventeenth century, forms a notable instance) is open to bribery on the right hand and on the left, and must be expected to temporise and vacillate, promoting the interest now of one of its neighbours, now of the other. But however unfavourable such conditions of existence may be to the minor political morals of the boundary-state itself, they are attended with comparatively little danger to the commonwealth of nations in general, where, as in the case of Savoy and Piedmont at the period to which we refer, that state is at one within itself, able to defend itself, and not able to bring vast forces into the field on any side. It is required of it that it maintain a certain stedfast isolation amid its ever-changing alliances, and be prepared to dare all and to risk all when its own nationality is at stake. To this end it must be essentially military; and it follows that if compact and military, it must also be small, or it would cease to be a mere boundary-state, and would take its place among the great powers. But Austria has not these characteristics. She is a fallen great power. She is talked of as a boundary-state,—a state limiting its ambition to self-defence,—because her independence is endangered by internal decay. She can within certain limits still act on a great scale, show an imperial front, and affect the likeness of a kingly crown. Such a part she will not resign while she has a neighbouring, a sympathising, and a powerful ally, able and willing to hide the patches in her purple, and to support her while he uses her. It is our firm conviction that Austria has been for years, and will continue to be, the tool of Russia; and that while England follows in the wake of Austrian diplomacy there will be no safety for Europe. Austria is no longer an empire of the first class, and she has not one of the qualities necessary in a mere boundary-state.

Two topics will be urged in opposition to this view. First, it is said that Austria has repeatedly shown an unexpected vitality, and more particularly in her last great crisis. We apprehend that these appearances are illusory. There never was a time when there was a more general opinion than now that Austria cannot keep Lombardy for ever; and it was only in

Lombardy that she re-subjugated a conquered population by her own strength. The chances of conciliation are even more precarious than those of repression. But little augury for the future can be drawn from any present tranquillity in Hungary. Nationalities are long in dying, and the great kingdom of Hungary, with its wealth, its warlike population, its language and its literature, would in any case require generations to assimilate it with the Duchy of Austria. The weariness of a vanquished people, the enforced good behaviour of masters who have conquered by foreign aid, may give a long interval of peace. There was a long peace in Italy in the eighteenth century. Meanwhile, what Carlyle calls the "organic filaments" of freedom are alive. Galileo may make a formal retractation of his doctrines; but he laughs in his sleeve as he taps his foot upon the earth and whispers, "It moves for all that." The quiet expansion and contraction of unseen iron-girders will loosen the masonry of the strongest buildings. With the present rapid diffusion of mental activity and political information, we find it difficult to believe that Austria is firmly seated on her Hungarian any more than on her Italian throne. She will want extraneous help yet.

But then it is said (and very confidently) that Austria has an intense hatred and dread of the subjugators of Hungary, that she feels the humiliation of such aid, and will take care to be independent of it in future. We share no such confidence. It is not in the power of the Court of Vienna to be independent. It was not the empire which was obliged and humiliated; the empire was subdued. The fatal favour was not the reduction of an insurgent province, but the salvation of the house of Hapsburg when the total dissolution of its power was imminent. As long as that house keeps any hold on its dominions, it must ward off dissolution at any price and with any assistance. Our wishes that it may even now seek safety in the attachment of its own subjects are stronger than our hopes. We, on our side, have our scepticisms, and among them is an incapacity to anticipate the repentance of the Hapsburgs.

It will be asked whether it is better that Austria, supposing her to be necessarily dependent, should be taught to rely rather on France than on Russia. That the realms at present cursed with her sway should be liable to be trodden by the armies of either is a great evil; but we think that there is much less danger from France than from the aggressive suzerainty of Russia. Besides the brotherhood in legitimacy and the steady policy of Russia, it seems likely to be easier to secure a European combination against France than against Russia. Russia herself will always retain power enough in the East to keep France in check

by her rivalry; and the weakness of Austria is in the East, not in the West. It is difficult to imagine France exercising the insidious protection over Austria which we know to be easy for Russia. It is certain that she has no hold over the subjects of Austria like that which Russia possesses as the champion of the Slavonic race.

We cannot see that the peace now under discussion will materially diminish the permanent dangers to be apprehended from Russia. We have assumed throughout that it will be a good peace according to its professions. Our space will not allow an investigation of its basis. We believe that the main points involved in it are very generally understood, and we do not apprehend that our diplomatists will be remiss in dealing with them. We cannot suppose, for instance, that so evident an evasion as the permission to make naval arsenals at Nicolaieff, or elsewhere on the estuaries of the Black Sea, while they are prohibited on the coast of the Black Sea itself, will be listened to for a moment. About one matter it is natural to feel more anxiety, both from its importance, and from the sinister influence which Austria is too likely to exercise in respect to it: we mean the future constitution of the Danubian Principalities. If they are rendered really strong and independent,—and to make them so the wishes of the population must be consulted in good faith,—something in the right direction will have been done which we must except from the general tenor of our remarks. If there is a failure here, Austria will indeed have had her perfect work. We trust that the late rumour of an intention to leave this matter to future arrangement, as of secondary moment, is unfounded, and that it will not be left to accident and Austria to settle whether her creature Stirbey is to be in power or not, and whether the Principalities are to be united or not.

Art. IX.—MEDIATORIAL RELIGION.

The Nature of the Atonement, and its relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life. By John M'Leod Campbell. Cambridge, Macmillan and Co. 1856.

This is a strange book. A Greek would have hated it. A Puritan would have found it savoury, even where it was unsound. Rosenkranz, who has written on the *Æsthetik des Hässlichen*, would have been thankful for such a fund of illustration. Cumbrous, tiresome, monotonous, it has few attractions

for the natural man, who may have a weakness in favour of pure English and nice grammar. It despises the graces of carnal literature, and treats all the colour and music of language as the roundheads treated a cathedral, silencing the "box of whistles" and smashing the "mighty big angels in glass." And yet, if you can get over its grating way of delivering itself, you will find it no barbaric product, but the utterance of a deep and practised thinker, charged with the richest experiences of the Christian life, and resolute to clear them from every tangle of fiction or pretence. Beneath the uncouth form there is not only severe truth, but great tenderness and beauty,—a fine apprehension of the real inner strife of tempted men, and an intense faith in an open way of escape from it, without compromise of any sanctity. The author, though not tuneful in his speech, has the gifts of a true prophet; and often enables one to fancy what Isaiah might have been if he had heard nothing but the bagpipe, and had set his "burdens" to its drone. Whether Mr. Campbell's style has been formed north of the Tweed, we know not. In any case it is trained in the school of Calvinism; is untouched therefore by any feeling for art; and runs on with a sort of extemporaneous habit, insufficiently relieved by occasional flashes of grotesque and forcible expression. It is only in exterior aspect, however, that he presents the features of the rugged old Calvinism: and though the first-born of that system and its younger sons are distinguished like Isaac's children, "Esau is a hairy man, and Jacob is a smooth man," yet no true patriarch of the school can be so blind as not to see beneath our author's goat-skin dress, and know that he is other than the heir. In fact, the peculiarity of this work as a theological phenomenon is, that it is a destruction of Calvinism without any revolt from it,—an escape from it through its own interior. Its postulates are not denied. Its phraseology is not rejected. Its statement of the problem of redemption is in the main accepted. Its provision for the solution,—the Incarnation of the Son,—is sacredly preserved. Yet these elements are put into such play as to make it check-mate itself on its own area. Its definitions are shown to be suicidal; and its sharp-edged logic is used to cut through the ligaments that constrain and shape it.

We have spoken first of the *style* of this book, because it strikes the reader at the outset, and is not unlikely to repel him if he is not warned. Of one other feature, derived from the same school, we must say a word, to qualify the admiration and gratitude which we shall then ungrudgingly tender to the author. In common with all the great masters of the "evangelical" school, he is too much at home with the Divine economy; knows too well how the same thing appears from the finite and

the infinite point of view; can tell too surely how a mixed nature, both divine and human, would feel on looking from both ends at once; and altogether goes with too close a search to the "secret place of the Most High." Not that he speaks unworthily on these high themes; we have nothing truer to suggest, except more silence. But we must confess that when a teacher lays down the conditions of divine possibility, expatiates psychologically on the sentiments of the Father and the Son, and seems as though he had been allowed a peep into the autobiography of God, we shrink from the sharp outlines, and feel that we shall believe more if we are shown less. With so many soundings taken, and so many channels buoyed, the sense of the shoreless sea is gone, and we find only a port of traffic, with coast-lights instead of stars. The temptation to this theological map-making has always proved peculiarly strong among the disciples of Geneva: and the reason is to be found in the very nature of the problem they have attempted to resolve. Religion has two foci to determine,—the divine nature and the human. Athanasius and the Greek influence fixed the doctrine of the Godhead: Augustine and the Latin Church defined the spiritual state of man. The one, it has been said, produced a theology; the other, an anthropology. In the construction of the former it is obvious that the appeal could be made only to positive authority, whether of Scripture or the Church. On the Nicene question no one could pretend to have personal insight or scientific data: it must be decided by arbitrary vote on impressions of testimony. But for establishing a doctrine of humanity, the living resources of consciousness and experience were present with perpetual witness; every proposition advanced could be confronted with its corresponding reality: the disciple could not help carrying the dogma inward to the test of his self-knowledge. The scheme of the Trinity partook of the nature of a *Gnosis*, which dwelt apart from the stir of phenomena, and having once set and crystallised, could only be hung up for preservation. The dogmas of human depravity and helplessness partook of the nature of a *Science*, coming in contact with the facts of life and character at every point. Moral experience had something to say to them; and unless they could keep good terms with it, they could not hope to hold their ground. Hence the Augustinian divines have been constrained to seek a *philosophy* of religion, and to collate the text of their scriptural system with the running paraphrase of actual life. No writers have contributed so much to lay bare the inmost springs of human action and emotion; have tracked with so much subtlety the windings of guilty self-deception, or so found the secret sorrow that lies at the core of every unconse-

crated joy. If we must concede to the Roman Catholic casuists and the problems of the confessional the merit of creating an ethical Art embodied in systems of rules, we owe to the deeper evangelical spirit, whether in its action or its reaction, the ground-lines of an ethical Philosophy;—or, if you deny that such a thing as yet exists, at least the true idea and undying quest of it. The disciples of Augustine, belonging to an anthropological school, have been naturally distinguished by a reflective and psychologic habit.

If it was the function of the Greek period to settle the doctrine of God, and of its Latin successor to define the nature of man, it was the aim of the *Reformation*, leaving these two extremes undisturbed, to find the way of mediation between them. So long as the great sacerdotal church, living continuator of Christ's presence, was intrusted with the business, private Christians wanted no theory on the subject; all nice questions went into the ecclesiastical closet and disappeared. But as soon as ever the hierarchy fell out of this position, there was an immense void left to be filled. On the one hand, Infinite Holiness, quite alienated; on the other, Human Pravity, quite helpless: how was any approximation to be rendered conceivable? True, the great original Mediation on Calvary which the papal priesthood pretended to prolong remained; for it was fixed in history. But it lay a great way off, a fact in the old past; and its intervention was required to-day by Melancthon, and Carlstadt, and a whole generation quite remote from it. How was its power to be fetched into the present? how applied to men walking about in Wittenberg or Zürich? This was the problem which flew open by the cancelling of the Romish credentials: and the various answers to it constitute the body of Protestant theology. In one point they all agree, that, to replace the priestly media that are thrust out, *Personal Faith* is the element that must be brought in. In what way this subjective state of the individual mind draws or appropriates the efficacy of the Incarnation; in what *order* the redeeming process runs among the three given terms,—the alienated Father, the mediating Son, the believing disciple; whether any part of the process is moral and real, or all is legal and virtual; these are questions which the Reformation has found it easier to open than to close. But answer them as you will, they entangle your thoughts in the mutual relations and sentiments of three persons; and cannot be discussed without establishing some principles of moral psychology, as the common grounds of intercommunion between minds finite and infinite, and dealing with hypothetical problems of divine as well as human casuistry. Hence the inevitable tendency of the doctrine of Mediation to venture on a natural history of the

Divine Mind,—to construct a drama of Providence and Grace, with plot too artfully wrought for the free hand of Heaven, and traits too specific and minute for reverent contemplation.

It is deeply instructive to observe the pulsation of religious thought in men. Revealed religion is ever passing into natural, and natural returning to reinterpret the revealed. We can almost see the steps by which sacred history was converted into dogma; while dogma, assumed in turn as the starting-point, is ever producing new readings of the history. This world may be regarded as a *human theatre*, where the Wills of men perform the parts; or as the stage of *Divine agency*, using the visible actors as the executants of an invisible thought. Its vicissitudes, presented in the former aspect, yield only history; in the latter, give rise to doctrine. Noticed by Tacitus, the life of Christ is a provincial incident of Tiberius' reign, and his death a judicial act of Pontius Pilate's government. In the three first Gospels and the book of Acts, the crucifixion is still the act of wicked or misguided men, inflicted on an expostulating victim; not, however, without being *foreseen* as the appointed precursor of a resurrection. The event is thus in the main simply historical; but with a divine comment which gives it an incipient theological significance. It appears under another aspect in the Gospel of John; there, Christ not only foresaw, but *determined* his own death: his life "no man taketh it from him," but he "lays it down of himself;" he is not merely the submissive medium, but the spontaneous co-agent of a Divine intent. Finally, in St. Paul, to whom the person and ministry of Christ were unfamiliar, who, as disciple of his heavenly life, looked back upon them from a higher point,—the historical aspect almost wholly disappears in the ideal; and the cross becomes the gospel, the wisdom of God and the power of God, the self-sacrifice of the Son the reconciling way to the Father, the very focus and symbol of all the mystery and mercy comprised in humanity. The movement of thought through these successive stages is obvious. An event is at first accepted as it arises. But, in proportion as its concrete impression retires, the need becomes more urgent to find its function: instinctive search is made for all those elements, accessories, and effects of it, which promise to bring out its meaning and idea, until at last its doctrine absorbs itself, and enters the human mind as a permanent factor of positive religion. It is thus that the great antitheses, of Law and Gospel, of the Natural and the Spiritual man, of dead Works and living Faith, of self-seeking enmity and self-surrendering reconciliation with God,—have settled upon the consciousness of Christendom, and grown into the very substance of its experience. They have become part of its natural religion. But in

this character they may, conversely, be taken as the initiative of a new version of the history whence they sprung. They could not be born into unmixed and formed existence at once; but, like all new affections, must feel their way out of an early indeterminate state, into clear self-apprehension and settled purity. The testimony of the Christian conscience needs time to become articulate and collected. The shadow of human guilt may lie so dark upon the mind, the dawn of the divine holiness may so dazzle the inward vision, that blindness in part may linger for a while; and the eye, in very opening to Christ's healing touch, may fail to see. Once accustomed to the new light of life, men are no longer occupied with it alone, but find in it a medium for truer discernment of objects around. The special sentiments awakened by the gospel test themselves afresh, like any other theory, by being fully lived-out, and tried as experiments upon the soul. The type of character,—the edition of human nature,—in which they take embodiment, becomes a distinct object of critical appreciation; and while all its deep expressive traits speak for the inner truth whence they are moulded, every mixture of disharmony or defect calls for some revision of idea. In the thirsty spiritual state to which men were reduced on the eve of the Reformation, they drank up with intense eagerness the most turbid supplies of evangelical doctrine. With purer health and finer perception they become aware that not all was water of life; and that coarse notions of the nature of justice, the conditions of mercy, and the measurement of sin, were intermixed and must become mere sediment. Cleared of these, the theory is taken back to the facts of revelation, and so washed through them, that they also emerge as from a sprinkling of regeneration. Through such re-baptism does our author, furnished with a purified conception of "atonement," pass the history of Christ.

In looking for the whereabouts of the atonement, we are guided, as in search for the pole-star, by two pointers whose indications we are to follow. Its function was double,—to cancel a guilty past,—to make a holy future: and it must be of such a nature as to disappoint neither of these conditions. In determining its form, the great anxiety of theologians hitherto has been to fit it for its *retrospective* action, and disembarrass the problem of salvation of the burden of accumulated sin. It is Mr. Campbell's distinction that he lays the superior stress on its *prospective* action, and requires that it shall positively heal the sickness of our nature, and evolve thence a real and living righteousness. God's moral perfectness could be satisfied with nothing less. If, indeed, He looked on our guilt merely as an obstacle to our "salvation," and desired to remove it as a hin-

drance out of the way,—if He rather sought a pretext for making us happy than a provision for drawing us to goodness,—then the work of Christ might be so devised as simply to tear out the defiled page of the past, and register an infinite credit not our own, without inherent care for ulterior personal holiness. But were it so, the divine *love* would amount only to an unrighteous desire for our happiness, and the divine *righteousness* to an unloving repulsion from our sin. Such spurious analysis corresponds with no reality; and in the truth of things there can be no heavenly affection that is not holy, nor any holiness that is not affectionate.

"While in reference to the not uncommon way of regarding this subject which represents righteousness and holiness as opposed to the sinner's salvation, and mercy and love as on his side, I freely concede that all the divine attributes were, in one view, against the sinner, in that they called for the due expression of God's wrath against sin in the history of redemption; I believe, on the other hand, that the justice, the righteousness, the holiness of God have an aspect according to which they, as well as his mercy, appear as intercessors for man, and crave his salvation. Justice may be contemplated as according to sin its due; and there is in righteousness, as we are conscious to it, what testifies that sin should be miserable. But *justice* looking at the sinner, not simply as the fit subject of punishment, but as existing in a moral condition of unrighteousness, and so its own opposite, must desire that the sinner should cease to be in that condition; should cease to be unrighteous—should become righteous: righteousness in God craving for righteousness in man, with a craving which the realisation of righteousness in man alone can satisfy. So also of holiness. In one view it repels the sinner, and would banish him to outer darkness, because of its repugnance to sin. In another it is pained by the continued existence of sin and unholiness, and must desire that the sinner should cease to be sinful. So that the sinner, conceived of as awakening to the consciousness of his own evil state, and saying to himself, 'By sin I have destroyed myself. Is there yet hope for me in God?' should hear an encouraging answer, not only from the love and mercy of God, but also from his very righteousness and holiness. We must not forget, in considering the response that is in conscience to the charge of sin and guilt, that, though the fears which accompany that response are partly the effect of a dawning of light, they also in part arise from remaining darkness. He who is able to interpret the voice of God within him truly, and with full spiritual intelligence, will be found saying, not only, 'There is to me cause for fear in the righteousness and holiness of God,' but also, 'There is room for hope for me in the divine righteousness and holiness.' And when gathering consolation from the meditation of the name of the Lord, that consolation will be not only, 'Surely the divine mercy desires to see me happy rather than miserable,' but also, 'Surely the divine righteousness desires to *see me righteous*—the divine holiness desires to see me holy—my con-

tinuing unrighteous and unholy is as grieving to God's righteousness and holiness as my misery through sin is to his pity and love.' 'Good and righteous is the Lord, therefore will He teach sinners the way which they should choose.' 'A just God and a Saviour;' not as the harmony of a seeming opposition, but 'a Saviour, *because* a just God.'" —p. 29.

From this justly-conceived passage the characteristics of Mr. Campbell's theory may already be divined. He sets his faith on a concrete, living, indivisible God, whom you can never understand by laying out His abstract attributes one by one, with their separate requirements, and then putting them together again to compute the resultant. He insists on the absolute dominance of a moral and spiritual idea throughout the revealed economy: of this nature is the evil to be met—sin and estrangement; of this nature is the good to be reached—righteousness and reconciliation; and only of this nature can be the mediation which effects the change; related upward to the Father and downward to men, in a way accordant with the laws of conscience, and intelligible by its self-light. He craves, therefore, a natural juncture, a real causal nexus, between the several parts of the process, to the exclusion of all forensic fictions and arbitrary scene-shifting and sovereign *tours-de-force*. In short, he will have no tricks passed off, no *quasi*-transformations upon the conscience; he feels the moral world to be above the range of mere miracle; any change in it irreducible to its solemn laws would *ipso facto* fall out of it and become a mere dynamical surprise. Of *physical* miracle our author avails himself to the full amount; the incarnation of the Son of God being, with him, as with others, the central fact and essential medium of Christian redemption. But the august power thus *super*naturally set up—the Person at once divine and human—works out his great problem *naturally*, without requiring the suspension of one rule of right, or holding any magical dealings with the character of God or man. His problem, therefore, is to show how the life and death of Christ—considered as God in humanity—were fitted, and alone fitted, to blot out the sins of the world before God, and to introduce among men a new state of real righteousness and eternal life.

The common evangelical scheme of redemption so far affects to be deduced from certain general principles, and to render the way of redemption *conceivable*, that it is stigmatised as *rationalistic* by Catholics and Anglicans. It is so, however, only in the sense of hanging well together, and serving the purpose of a *theological Mnemonic* to those who want a religion ready more than deep. In the higher sense, of occupying any natural ground of reason, it does not earn its reproach. The proposi-

tions which it lays down, as to the inability of a holy nature to forgive unless circuitously and with compensation, and as to the commutability of either penal liabilities or moral attributes, are without any support from our primary sentiments of right and wrong, and could be carried out by no sane man in the conduct of life. The doctrine is taught in two principal forms;—the earlier and more exact scheme of "*Satisfaction*," elaborated by Anselm of Canterbury, and perfected by Owen and Edwards; and the modern theory of "*Public Justice*," maintained in the writings of Dr. Pye Smith and Dr. Payne, and prevailing wherever the first decadence from the old Calvinism is going on. The first of these prepares its ground by laying down these principles as fundamental;—that the connection between sin and suffering is inviolably secured on the veracity of God; that "when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants," and have only rendered our strict due; that, far from "doing all," we have done and can do nothing, except accumulate guilt, which, measure it as you will,—by the majesty of the authority defied, or the multitude of the offenders and their sins,—is practically of infinite amount. Here, then, is a case of utter despair: infinite debt; nothing to pay; remission impossible; punishment eternal; death unattainable. But we are brought into the labyrinth on one side, to emerge from it on the other. While *men* can only multiply demerit, there are natures conceivable to which merit is possible. A divine Person, laying aside a blessedness inherently his, and assuming sorrow not his own, and doing this out of a pure love, fulfils the conditions; and when the Son takes on him our humanity, the act, carried out unto the end, has a merit in it which in amount is a full set-off against the guilt of men. Still, this only leaves us with two opposite funds—of infinite good desert and infinite ill desert—which sit apart and unrelated. In due course, the one ought to have a boundless reward, the other a boundless punishment. But to render his affluence available for our debt, the Son consummates his self-sacrifice, substitutes himself for us as the object of retribution, and dies once for all—one infinite death for many finite hereafters of woe. The Father's justice is satisfied; the allotment of suffering to sin has been accurately observed; His desire to pardon is released from its restraint. Having dealt with the person of the Son as if it were mankind, He may deal with mankind as if they were the Son, and look upon them as clothed with a perfect obedience.

The wholly artificial structure of this scheme, which is its greatest condemnation, has been its chief security. It is by approaching within conducting-distance of reality, that a doctrine *elicits resistance* and meets the stroke of natural objection; and

if it only keeps far enough aloft in the metaphysic atmosphere, it may float along unarrested from zone to zone of time. Men know not what to make of propositions so much out of their sphere, so evasive of any real encounter with their consciousness, and are apt to let them pass for their very strangeness' sake. But surely we are bound to demand for them some "response of conscience," and, with Mr. Campbell, to demur to such of them as will not bear this test. Limiting ourselves to the *mediatorial* part of the theory, we will assume the problem of moral evil to be correctly stated, and only ask whether, from the supposed case of despair the offered solution affords any real exit of relief. Nor do we assume this for argument's sake alone. We can perfectly understand any remorseful sense, however deep, of human unworthiness; any appreciative reverence, however intense, of Christ's self-sacrifice. Set the one under the shadow of the Father's infinite disapproval, the other in the light of His infinite complacency; so far we go; there let them lie. But what next? Here, on the left hand, is Sin with its need of punishment; there, on the right, a perfect Holiness with its merits. While they are thus spread beneath the Father's eye, they break up their inviolable alliances; each moral cause crosses over and takes the opposite effect. If such change took place, the *seat* of the fact must be sought partly in the consciousness of Christ, partly in the Father's view of things. In reference to the first, must we say that the Crucified *felt himself* under Divine wrath and punishment, and esteemed that wrath to be *just*—the fitting expression of his own inward *remorse?* If so, can we affirm that his consciousness was veracious? or did he not feel, in regard to *others'* sins, sentiments and experiences that are false except in relation to *one's own?* And, ascending to the other point of view, shall we affirm that the Father *saw sin* in the Son and was angry with him; so that, in the hour of sublimest obedience, the words ceased to be true, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"? And on the other hand, what is meant when it is said that beneath the Divine eye men in their guilt are seen "clothed with" a perfect righteousness? Is such an aspect of them *true?* or is it akin to an ocular deception? We seem to be reduced to this dilemma;—the change of apparent moral place implied in "imputation" is either a faithful representation, or a *quasi*-representation, of the reality of things. If the latter, then the Divine consciousness is illusory, and the world is administered on a fiction; if the former, then the moral law, in assuring us of the personal and inalienable nature of sin, gives a false report, and there is nothing to prevent a circulating medium of merit from passing current through the universe.

Mr. Campbell's deference for the great advocates of this marvellous doctrine does not obstruct his perception of its difficulties:

"I freely confess," he says, "that to my own mind it is a relief, not only intellectually, but also morally and spiritually, to see that there is no foundation for the conception that when Christ suffered for us, the just for the unjust, he suffered either 'as by imputation unjust,' or 'as if he were unjust.' I admit that *intellectually* it is a relief not to be called to conceive to myself a double consciousness, both in the Father and in the Son, such as seems implied in the Father's seeing the Son at one and the same time, though it were but for a moment, as the well-beloved Son, to whom infinite favour should go forth, and also as worthy, in respect of the imputation of our sins to him, of being the object of infinite wrath, he being the object of such wrath accordingly; and in the Son's knowing himself the well-beloved of the Father, and yet having the consciousness of being personally, through imputation of our sin, the object of the Father's wrath. I feel it intellectually a relief neither to be called to conceive this, nor to assume it as an unconceived mystery. Still more do I feel it *morally* and *spiritually* a relief, not to be required to recognise legal fictions as having a place in this high region, in which the awful realities of sin and holiness, spiritual death and spiritual life, are the objects of a transaction between the Father and the Son in the Eternal Spirit."—p. 310.

The second form of mediatorial doctrine, to which we have referred as the modern type of Calvinism, has arisen from the endeavour to evade some of these perplexities. The riddle that haunts its teachers is still the same,—how it can become possible to show mercy to sinners; but the difficulty in the way is differently conceived, and therefore met by a different expedient. It is not an obstacle in God, arising from his personal sentiment of equity which must be satisfied; but springs out of the necessity of consistent rectitude, and adherence to law in his administrative government. The Father himself, it is intimated, would be quite willing to forgive, were there nothing to consult except his own disposition. But it would never do to play fast and loose with the criminal law of the universe, and, notwithstanding the most solemn enactments, let off delinquents on mere repentance, as if nothing were the matter beyond a personal affront. Something more is due to *Public Justice*. If the due course of retribution is to be turned aside, it must be in such a way and at such a cost as to proclaim aloud the awfulness of the guilt remitted. This, we are told, is accomplished by the sufferings and death of the Son of God, which were substituted for our threatened punishment, not as its quantitative equal paid to the Father, but as a moral equivalent in the eyes of men. Their validity is thus conceived to depend by no means on their *particular measure*, but on the meritorious obedience of love which

was their sustaining and animating soul, and which, being on the scale of a Divine nature, gave infinite value to the smallest sorrow. Within the casket of his grief was held such a priceless righteousness, that, on beholding it, the Father might regard it as an adequate plea for acts of mercy to sinners. He does not indeed impute to them the actual moral perfectness of Christ, so as to see them invested with it, any more than he imputed to Christ their guilt, and frowned on Calvary. It is the *effects* only of that holiness which he imputes; he offers to men the benefits of it, without reckoning it as really theirs, and giving them the *legal standing* which its possession would bestow.

No doubt this scheme gets rid of the penal mensuration and moral conveyancing of the older Calvinism. It shifts also the bar to free mercy away from the inner personality of God, and sets it in his outer government. But when we again attempt to seize the *mediatorial expedient*, what is it? It is said to be a display of the enormity of that guilt which needs to be redeemed at such a cost. But is that need *real?* Have we not been told that it has no place in God? Does he then hang out a profession that is not true to the kernel of things, but only a show-off for impression's sake? If Eternal Justice in its inner essence does *not* require the expiation provided, why in its outer manifestation pretend that it *does?* As nothing can become right for "the sake of good example" that is not right in itself, so is "Public Justice," unsustained by the sincere heart of reality, a mere dramatic imposture. Mr. Campbell has supplied us with a forcible statement of this truth:

"Surely rectoral or public justice, if it is to have any moral basis, —any basis other than expediency,—must rest upon, and refer to, distributive or absolute justice. In other words, unless there be a rightness in connecting sin with misery, and righteousness with blessedness, looking at individual cases simply in themselves, I cannot see that there is a rightness in connecting them as a rule of moral government. 'An English judge once said to a criminal before him: You are condemned to be transported, not because you have stolen these goods, but that goods may not be stolen.' (*Jenkyns*, 175, 176.) This is quoted in illustration of the position, that 'the death of Christ is an honourable ground for remitting punishment,' because 'his sufferings answer the same ends as the punishment of the sinner.' I do not recognise any harmony between this sentiment of the English judge and the voice of an awakened conscience on the subject of sin. It is just because he has sinned and deserves punishment, and not because he says to himself that God is a moral governor, and must punish him to deter others, that the wrath of God against sin seems so terrible,—and as just as terrible."—p. 79.

Even were the expression backed-up by reality, we cannot

but ask about the fitness of the medium for the thought to be conveyed. God's horror at guilt is publicly proclaimed by the most awful crime in human history! To explain the difficulty of letting off the offender, he exhibits the anguish of the innocent! The spectacle would seem in danger of suggesting the wrong lesson to the terrified observer,—of raising to intensity the doubt whether, in a world that gives its silver to a Judas, its judgment-seat to a Pilate, and the cross to the Son of God, any Providence can care for rectitude at all. Even when the death of Christ is contemplated exclusively as a *self*-sacrifice, without remembering the guilt which compassed it, we are at a loss to understand how it could be "an honourable ground for remitting punishment." What difference did it make in the previous reasons of the Divine government, so that penalties right before should be less right afterwards? If Catiline were undergoing his just retribution at the date of the Last Supper, what plea was there for releasing him at or before the date of the resurrection? That obedience rendered and suffering endured by one soul should dispense with the liabilities of another is a supposition at variance with the personal and inalienable nature of all sin; and to say that God "imputes the *effects*" of Christ's holiness to those who are not partakers in the cause, is to accuse the Divine government of total disregard to character and evasion of moral reality. The old Calvinism represents the Father as having an illusory *perception* of men, *as if* they were clad in a divine righteousness. The new Calvinism represents him as having indeed a true perception of their unrighteousness, but, notwithstanding this, falsifying the truth *in action*, and proceeding as if the facts were quite other than they are. Inasmuch as unveracious vision is intellectual, while unveracious practice is moral, the younger doctrine appears to us a positive degradation of the elder, not only in logical completeness, but in religious worth. Both of them make the redeeming economy proceed upon a *fiction;* but there is all the difference between unconscious and conscious fiction; between an inner "satisfaction" brought about by an optical displacement of merit, and an outward "exhibition" set up for the sake of impression. The theory of Owen, stern as it is, bears the stamp of resolute meaning consistently carried through into the inmost recess of the Divine nature. The newer doctrine is the production of a platform age, which obtrudes considerations of *effect* even into its thoughts of God and his government, and can scarce refrain from turning the universe itself into a theatre for rhetorical pathos and *ad captandum* display.

With good reason therefore does our author feel that this whole subject is in need of reconsideration. His own doctrine

diverges from its predecessors at a very early point, and is seen at its source in the following proposition of Edwards, as cited by Mr. Campbell:

"In contending that sin must be punished with an infinite punishment, President Edwards says, 'that God could not be just to himself without this vindication, unless there could be such a thing as a repentance, humiliation, and sorrow for this (viz. sin) proportionable to the greatness of the Majesty despised,'—for that there must needs be 'either an equivalent punishment, or an equivalent sorrow and repentance;' 'so,' he proceeds, 'sin must be punished with an infinite punishment;' thus assuming that the alternative of 'an equivalent sorrow and repentance' was out of the question. But, upon the assumption of that identification of himself with those whom he came to save on the part of the Saviour, which is the foundation of Edwards's whole system, it may at the least be said, that the Mediator had the two alternatives open to his choice,—either to endure for sinners an equivalent punishment, or to experience in reference to their sin, and present to God on their behalf, an adequate sorrow and repentance. Either of these courses should be regarded by Edwards as equally securing the vindication of the majesty and justice of God in pardoning sin."—p. 136.

The side of the alternative which Edwards abandoned, our author takes up and follows out. The work of Christ, as a ground of remission, consisted in the offering on behalf of humanity of an adequate repentance. Adequate it could not have been but for his Divine nature; which attaches to his holy sorrow an infinite moral value, to balance the infinite heinousness of the sin deplored. The only reason why human penitence does not in itself avail to restore, lies in its imperfect purity and depth. Through the cloud of evil, and with the eye of self, we are disqualified for true discernment of sin as it is: both the limits of a finite nature, and the delusions of a tempted and fallen one, hinder us from appreciating the measure of our guilt and misery. Even when our better mind reasserts itself, our very compunction carries in it many a speck of ill, and our repentance needs to be repented of. But, were it not for this, there would be "more atoning worth in one tear of the true and perfect sorrow which the memory of the past would awaken" "than in endless ages of penal woe." It is not the inefficacy but the impossibility of due penitence that constitutes our fatal disability; to be relieved from which we need to be taken out of ourselves, to be identified with a perfect spirit; our humanity must cease to be human, and become one with the Divine nature. This is precisely the condition which realised itself in Christ. As God in humanity, he had perfect sympathy with the holiness of one sphere, and the infirmities of the other; he saw the whole amount of the world's moral estrangement, not only with infinite

pity for its misery, but with infinite horror at its guilt. He could both make a plenary confession for us, and respond unreservedly to the Father's righteous judgment; could bear our burden on his heart before heaven, and utter the *Miserere* of holy sorrow, which our most plaintive cry can never approach. This is the true nature of his sufferings. He "made his soul an offering for sin," yielded it up to be filled with a sense of our real aspect beneath the Omniscient eye, and an Amen to its condemning look. Hence his sorrows had nothing *penal* in them, any more than the tears of a devout parent over a prodigal child are penal. They are incident to that attitude of soul which a perfect nature cannot but have in the presence of a brother's sin. They are altogether moral and spiritual; and their efficacy as an expiation, is that of true repentance; expressing at once our entire confession, acceptance of the Father's just displeasure, and sympathy with his compassionate grieving at our alienation.

At the same time, this mere retrospective confession would not of itself avail, were there no better hope for the future of mankind. But our Mediator's own experience in humanity, his consciousness of intimate peace and communion with the Father, opened to him the other side of our nature, assured him of its secret capacity for good, and filled him with hope in the very moment of contrition. As his sympathy could have fellowship with our temptations, so could ours have fellowship with his righteousness; and the light of Divine love that rested actually on himself was thereby a possibility for the universal human soul, and was already hovering round with longing to descend. It was on the strength of this assurance that his intercession on our behalf was presented; it would never have pleaded for indemnity in relation to the past but as the prelude to a real righteousness, a true partnership in his life of filial harmony with God. The validity of his transaction on our behalf consisted in its perfect seizure of the whole reality, its entire "response to the mind of the Father in relation to men;" sorrow for their estrangement, conviction of their possible return, and desire to draw them into the spirit of genuine Sonship.

It was needful, then,—so we conceive our author's meaning,—that the sentiments of God towards the world's sin and misery should quit their absolute position, and should come and take their station in humanity; and from that field should turn their gaze and expression upward to meet the Father's downward and accordant look. As this "Amen of the Son to the mind of the Father" constitutes the essence of the atonement on the Divine side, so does it consist on the human side in "the Amen of each individual soul to the Amen of the Son." The reproduction in us of the filial spirit of Christ,—his confession, his

pleading, his trust,—is our fellowship with him and reconciliation with God:

"This is saving faith,—true righteousness,—being the living action, and true and right movement of the spirit of the individual man in the light of eternal life. And the certainty that God has accepted that perfect and divine Amen as uttered by Christ in humanity, is necessarily accompanied by the peaceful assurance that in uttering, in whatever feebleness, a true Amen to that high Amen, the individual who is yielding himself to the spirit of Christ to have it uttered in him is accepted of God. This Amen in man is the due response to that word, 'Be ye reconciled to God;' for the gracious and gospel character of which word, as the tenderest pleading that can be addressed to the most sin-burdened spirit, I have contended above. This Amen is sonship; for the gospel-call, 'Be ye reconciled to God,' when heard in the light of the knowledge that 'God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,' is understood to be the call to each one of us on the part of the Father of our spirits, 'My son, give me thine heart,' addressed to us on the ground of that work by which the Son had declared the Father's name, that the love wherewith the Father hath loved him may be in us, and he in us. In the light itself of that Amen to the mind of the Father in relation to man which shines to us in the atonement, we see the *righteousness of God in accepting the atonement*, and in that same light the Amen of the individual human spirit to that divine Amen of the Son of God is seen to be what the divine righteousness will necessarily acknowledge as the *end of the atonement accomplished.*"—p. 225.

In this view, it is not the rescue from punishment, not any favourable change in our legal standing, not any imputed righteousness, that Christ's mediation obtains, but a real transformation of soul and character through the divine infection and infusion of his own filial spirit. Only in so far as his mind thus spreads to us are we united to him, or in any way partakers of his gift of life. Personal alienation can have no reversal but in personal return; nor can any thing "extraneous to the nature of the divine will itself, to which we are to be reconciled, have part in reconciling us to that will." The fear of Hell is not repentance; the assurance of Heaven is not salvation; nor under any modification can the desire of safety, or the consciousness of its attainment, constitute the least approach to holiness. The good alone can touch the springs of goodness; and the divine and trustful life of Christ must speak to us on its own account, and win us by its own power, or not at all. Not that it acts on us merely in the way of *example*. We do not so stand apart from him in our independent individuality, that by an external imitation we can copy him, and become, as it were, each another Christ, repeating in ourselves his offering of propitiation. He is the Vine, of which we are the branches. The sap is from him,

drawn through the eternal root of righteousness, and does but flow as a derived life into us. The Son of God is not a mere historical personage, to be contemplated at a distance in the past, but ever with us in the power of an endless life; still succouring us when we are tempted, and ministering to conscience a present help and peace. It is not, therefore, by *following* him, but by *abiding in* him, that we have our fellowship in his harmony with God.

The essence, then, of the scheme of redemption, in the view of our author, seems to be this: that the Divine nature entered humanity to open the Fatherliness of God by living the life of perfect Sonship; and that, having awakened that life in us by this its visible realisation, he sustains it by the inner presence of his Spirit. It is one of the obvious consequences of this doctrine, that no exclusive or exceptional value is to be ascribed to the *death* of Christ. It is simply the final and crowning expression of the same filial mind which is the continuous essence of his whole existence upon earth. Nor does the theory attach importance to any *sufferings* of Christ, as such; but only as media and measures of moral expression. Had men sinned *as spirits*, his reconciling work would not have involved death at all: but since in our constitution mortality is "the wages of sin," his response to the Divine mind in regard to sin would have been incomplete, had he not honoured this law and tasted its realisation. Not to lose sight of the main features of the doctrine in pursuit of details, we must pass without notice many curious and subtle thoughts of our author on this part of his subject. Indeed, every where the reader who has patience with the entangled style will find deep hints and delicate turns of reflection. But we must withdraw to a little distance from his system, and endeavour to look at it as a whole; fixing attention especially on the central point of all,—the *mediatorial provision*, which replaces the penal "satisfaction" of the elder Calvinism, and the "exhibition of rectoral justice" of the modern divines.

Instead of an infinite punishment endured or represented, the theory offers us an infinite *repentance* performed. Repentance for what?—for human sin. Repentance by whom?—by him "who knew no sin." Is this a thing that can be? Is vicarious contrition at all more conceivable than vicarious retribution? It is surely one and the same difficulty that meets them both. On what ground is the transfer of either moral qualities or their effects regarded by our author as impossible?—because at variance with our consciousness of the personal and inalienable nature of sin. But not less is this truth contradicted when *we say* that the guilt may be incurred by one person, and the

availing repentance take place in another. Nor can any imagination of Christ's state of mind identify it with penitence. Mr. Campbell himself describes it (p. 135) as having "all the elements of a perfect repentance in humanity for all the sin of man—a perfect sorrow—a perfect contrition,—all the elements of such a repentance, and that in absolute perfection—all—*excepting the personal consciousness of sin.*" This exception, however, contains just the essential element of the whole. Penitence without any personal consciousness of sin is a contradiction in terms; and the requisition of the divine law is, that *the sinner* shall turn from the evil of his heart, not that the righteous shall make confession for him. The entire moral value of contrition belongs to it as the sign of inner change of character, from prior evil to succeeding good; and it admits of no transplantation from the identical personality which has been the seat of the evil and is the candidate for the good.

Further: it seems a paradox to say, with our author, that true repentance is impossible to man, who alone needs it; and can be realised only by the Son of God, in whom there is no room for it. It would indeed be a hopeless realm to live in, which should annex to all sins both an imperative demand and an absolute disqualification for adequate contrition, and first open the fountain of availing tears in holy natures that have none to shed. It is, in truth, of the very essence of repentance to have its seat in mixed and imperfect moral beings: and our author lays upon it quite an arbitrary requisition, when he insists that, to pass as adequate, it must contain a perfect appreciation of the sin deplored,—a view of it coincident with that of God. Under such an aspect as this it could never have appeared to us, though we had remained guiltless of it, and recoiled from it: and we can hardly be required to reach, in the rebound of recovery, a point beyond the station which would have prevented the fall. Many errors in theology arise from applying absolute conceptions to relative conditions, and forgetting that religion, as realised in us, is a life, a movement, a progress, and not an ultimate limit of perfection. Repentance is a transitional state, to which it is absurd to apply an infinite criterion: it is a change from the worse to the better mind, and cannot need the resources or belong to the experience of the best. To pronounce it impossible to the wandering and fallen, and make it the exclusive function of the All-holy, implies the strangest metamorphosis of its meaning.

But how, it may be asked, could a paradox so violent find favour with an author every where intent on the exclusion of fiction from Christian theology? To refer a moral act to the *wrong personality*, to toss about a solemn change like penitence

between guilty and innocent, as if its particular seat were a matter of indifference, is so serious an error, that it could never enter a mind like Mr. Campbell's unless under some plausible disguise. Can we find the shape under which it has recommended itself to his approval?

The sentiment ascribed to the Son of God in regard to sin,—wanting as it does the essential penitential element of personal compunction,—is simple sorrow for others' guilt, founded on perfect apprehension of its nature. But this attitude of soul in him awakens the conscience of his disciples, and is reproduced in them by fellowship. Spread into their consciousness, it is no longer clear of the immediate presence of sin, but, falling in with it, assumes the missing element, and becomes repentance. When the Christian sense of evil, which ever partakes of true contrition, is thus contemplated as a transmigration of the Mediator's own spirit into the soul, the two are so identified in thought, that what is true only of the human effect is referred to the Divine cause; and the moral sorrow of Christ is regarded as *potentially* equivalent to repentance, because that is *actually* the form of the corresponding phenomenon in us. If this, however, *explains* our author's position, it hardly *justifies* it. Intercession for others in their guilt may *move them* to remorse for their own, but is a fact of quite different nature. As attributes and expressions of character the two phenomena are not to be confounded; and as affecting our relation to God, there is the obvious and admitted distinction, that intercession avails not for those who remain impenitent, and would not be needed for the spontaneously penitent. The sorrowful expostulations of the Son of God have only so far a reconciling effect as they become the medium, in the hearts of men, of an awakened contrition, aspiration, and faith. We cannot conceive them to have *immediately* altered,—as repentance *does*,—the personal relation between God and the transgressors of His will; else the change would be a change in the Divine sentiment whilst its objects still remained unchanged. The effect *waits* for its development in souls melted and renewed. And thus the atoning sorrow of Christ becomes simply a provision for a healing penitence in men.

The ascription of "repentance" to Christ is curious in another point of view. It arises from a blending together of *his* consciousness and *his disciples'*; from slurring the lines of personality between them; from regarding their spiritual state as an organic extension of his, and his as the vital root of theirs. In his endeavour to recommend it to us, our author instinctively runs into abstract expressions in speaking of mankind; fusing *down* concrete men into "*humanity;*" referring to the Mediator

as "God in *humanity;*" and so, dealing with our nature as if it were a single existence, carrying or turning up all its individuals as partial phenomena of one essence. On the other hand, in our endeavour to correct his doctrine, we have had to lay stress on the inalienable and separate character of all particular persons, taken one by one; to insist on the solitude of each responsible agent, and the impassable barriers which forbid the transference of moral attributes from mind to mind. Which of these two modes of conception is the truer? For according as we incline to the one or the other,—according as we treat *humanity* as the organic unit of which individual samples of mankind are numerical accidents, or take each man as an integer of which the race is a multiple,—shall we lean towards mediatorial or towards direct religion. We are firmly convinced that *no* doctrine of *mediation,*—in the strict sense implying transactions with God on behalf of men, *as well as* in the opposite direction,—can be harmonised with the modern *individualism;* and that it is precisely in the attempt to unite these incompatibles, that the forensic fictions to which Mr. Campbell objects, and the moral fiction in his own theory to which we object, have had their origin. They are mere artificial devices to compensate the loss of that realistic mode of conception in which alone a true atoning doctrine can rest in peace. So long as you contemplate the Redeemer as a detached person, not less insulated in his integrity of being than angel from archangel or from man, the difficulty will remain insuperable of making his moral acts avail for *other human individuals,* unless by a fictitious transference, against which conscience protests. Punishment by substitute, righteousness by deputy, vicarious repentance, are notions at variance with the fundamental postulates of the Moral Sense: and in the attempt to defend them, we are liable to lose the solemn, living, face-to-face reality of the strife within us, and to weave around us a web of legal and formal relations, as little like any heartfelt veracity as a Chancery-decree to a law of nature. In proportion as the soul is pierced with a sharper contrition, and attains a deeper and clearer insight into her own unfaithful disorder, will the inherent impossibility of any foreign exchange of righteousness become apparent, and the desire to be shielded from punishment will pass away: nor is the Conscience truly awakened which does not rather rush into the arms of its just anguish than start back and fly away. And the more you hold up to view the holiness of Christ, the darker will the personal past appear to grow: for self-reproach will say: "Yes, I see him as the holy Son of God; the guiltier am I that the vision did not keep me from my sin." Talk to such a one of Christ's transactions on our behalf as "*federal head*" of a redeemed people; and his

misery will take no notice of the cold pretence, unless to think, —"Whatever engagements he made for me, I have broken them all." In short, while Christ is regarded simply as an historical individual, with the chasm of an incommunicable personality between him and us, no ingenuity can construct, except from the ruins of moral law, any other bridge of mediation than the suasion of natural reverence, by which his image passes into the heart of faith.

It is otherwise when we break through the restraints of the modern individualism, and strive to enter into that literal identification of Christ with Christians which is so frequent with St. Paul. If, instead of saying that Christ *had* our human nature, we could put our thought into this form,—"He *was* (and *is*) our human nature,"—if we could suppose our type of being not merely represented in him as a sample, but concentrated in him as a whole,—we should read its essentials and destination in his biography: his predicates would be its predicates: and in his sorrows and sanctity it might undergo purification. Humanity thus made into a person would then be the corresponding fact to Deity embodied in a person: both would be *Incarnations*,—essential Manhood and essential Godhead,—co-present in the same manifested life. In the ordinary conception of the doctrine of two natures Christ is represented, we believe, as *a* man: in the mode of thought to which we now refer he appears as *Man*. The difficulties which arise in the attempt to carry out this form of thinking are evident enough even to those who know nothing of the Parmenides of Plato. Indeed they are rendered so obtrusive by our modern habits of mind, that even a momentary seizure, for mere purposes of interpretation, of that older intellectual posture, scarcely remains possible to us. The apprehension of it, however, is indispensable to one who would appreciate the mediatorial theology of Christendom,—a theology which never could have sprung up if our present conceptualist and nominalist notions had always prevailed, and which, ever since their ascendency in Europe, has been driven to deplorable shifts of self-justification. The parallel between the first and second Adam, the fall and the restoration, the death incurred and the life recovered, acquire new meaning for those who thus think,—that as the incidents of Adam's existence become *generic* by *descent*, so the incidents of Christ's existence are generic by *diffusion;* that if in the one we see humanity at head-quarters in *time*, in the other we see it at head-quarters in *comprehension;* so that, like an atmosphere which, purified at nucleus, has the taint drawn off from its margin, our nature is freed from its sickliness in him. It becomes intelligible to us in what sense we are *to take* refuge in him as our including term, to find in him an

epitome of our true existence, to die (even to have died) with him, to suffer with him, to be risen with him, to dwell above in him. On the assumption of such a union, his life ceases to be an individual biography; what is manifested in him personally becomes true of us universally; and it is as if we were all,—like special examples in a general rule, or undeveloped truths in a parent-principle,—virtually present in his dealings with evil and with God. It is evident, that in this view his mediation has no chasm to cross, no foreign region to enter, but is an inseparable predicate of his own personal acts. The facility of conception afforded by this method is betrayed by Mr. Campbell's resort to an analogous hypothesis as a mere illustrative help to the mind. Witness the following striking passage:

"That we may fully realise what manner of equivalent to the dishonour done to the law and name of God by sin an adequate repentance and sorrow for sin must be, and how far more truly than any penal infliction such repentance and confession must satisfy divine justice, let us suppose that all the sin of humanity has been committed by one human spirit, on whom is accumulated this immeasurable amount of guilt; and let us suppose this spirit, loaded with all this guilt, to pass out of sin into holiness, and to become filled with the light of God, becoming perfectly righteous with God's own righteousness,—such a change, were such a change possible, would imply in the spirit so changed a perfect condemnation of the past of its own existence, and an absolute and perfect repentance, a confession of its sin commensurate with its evil. If the sense of personal identity remained, it must be so. Now, let us contemplate this repentance with reference to the guilt of such a spirit, and the question of pardon for its past sin and admission now to the light of God's favour. Shall this repentance be accepted as an atonement, and, the past sin being thus confessed, shall the Divine favour flow out on that present perfect righteousness which thus condemns the past, or shall that repentance be declared inadequate? Shall the present perfect righteousness be rejected on account of the past sin, so absolutely and perfectly repented of? and shall Divine justice still demand adequate punishment for the past sin, and refuse to the present righteousness adequate acknowledgment,—the favour which, in respect of its own nature, belongs to it? It appears to me impossible to give any but one answer to these questions. We feel that such a repentance as we are supposing would, in such a case, be the true and proper satisfaction to offended justice. Now, with the difference of personal identity, the case I have supposed is the actual case of Christ, the holy one of God, bearing the sins of all men on his spirit,—in Luther's words, 'the one sinner,'—and meeting the cry of these sins for judgment, and the wrath due to them, absorbing and exhausting that Divine wrath in that adequate confession and perfect response on the part of man which was possible only to the infinite and eternal righteousness in humanity."—p. 143.

The case which our author here presents as an aid to the imagination was to Luther the literal reality; to whom, accordingly, Christ was "the one sinner," *without* "the difference of personal identity," which is here so innocently slipped in, as if it were of no consequence. Christ, in the reformer's view, *was* humanity, *our* humanity; and the grand function and triumph of faith is to feel ourselves included in him, to merge our individuality, sins and all, in his comprehending manhood and atoning obedience. Hence the stress which Luther lays on "the well-applying the pronoun" *our*, in the phrase, "who gave himself for our sins;" "that this one syllable being believed may swallow up all thy sins." The effect of this realism on the theology of Luther has not been sufficiently remarked. We believe it to be the key to much that is obscure in his writings, and the secret source of his antipathy to the Calvinistic type of the Reformation. Absorption of Manhood into Christ,—distribution of Godhead into humanity,—these were the correlative parts of his objective belief,—Atonement and Eucharistic Real Presence: and neither in themselves nor in their correspondence can they be appreciated, without standing with him at the point of view which we have endeavoured to indicate.

Whether mediatorial religion shall continue to include in its scheme some provision for *dealing with God on behalf of men*, will mainly depend on the successful revival or the final abandonment of the old realistic modes of thought. Mr. Campbell's compromise with them, taking refuge with them for illustration while disowning them in substance, answers no logical or theological purpose at all. If he follows out the natural tendencies and affinities of his faith, he must rest exclusively at last in the other half of the doctrine, which exhibits the *dealing with man on behalf of God.* In this best sense mediatorial religion is imperishable, and imperishably identified with Christianity. The Son of God, at once above our life and in our life, morally divine and circumstantially human, mediates for us between the self so hard to escape, and the Infinite so hopeless to reach; and draws us out of our mournful darkness without losing us in excess of light. He opens to us the moral and spiritual mysteries of our existence, appealing to a consciousness in us that was asleep before. And though he leaves whole worlds of thought approachable only by silent wonder, yet his own walk of heavenly communion, his words of grace and works of power, his strife of divine sorrow, his cross of self-sacrifice, his reappearance behind the veil of life eternal, fix on him such holy trust and love, that where we are denied the assurance of knowledge, we attain the repose of faith.

LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES.

Grote's History of Greece. Vol. 12. Murray.

History of Latin Christianity. Vols. 4-6. By Dean Milman. Murray.

History of Christian Churches and Sects. By the Rev. J. B. Marsden. 2 vols. Bentley.

First Three Centuries of the Christian Church. By the Rev. J. J. Blunt. Murray.

A History of Europe from 1815-52. By Sir A. Alison. Vol. 5. Blackwood.

The European Revolutions of 1848. By Edward Stillingfleet Cayley. 2 vols. Smith and Elder.

A History of the Dutch Republic. By J. L. Motley. 2 vols. John Chapman.

The Nature of the Atonement, and its Relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life. By John M'Leod Campbell. Macmillan.

Hours with the Mystics. By Robert A. Vaughan. 2 vols. J. W. Parker and Son.

Lectures on the History of Ancient Philosophy. By the Rev. Archer Butler. Edited by William Hepworth Thompson, M.A. 2 vols. Macmillan.

Modern Painters. By John Ruskin. Vol. 3. Smith and Elder.

Illustrated Handbook of the Arts of the Middle Ages. By M. Labarte. Murray.

Handbook of Architecture. By James Fergusson. 2 vols. Murray.

Sinai and Palestine. By the Rev. A. P. Stanley. Murray.

The Englishwoman in America. Murray.

Letters from Cuba and the United States. By Hon. Amelia Murray. 2 vols. J. W. Parker and Son.

An Account of the Defence of Kars. By Dr. Sandwith. Murray.

A Journal of the War. By Mrs. Henry Duberly. Longman.

A Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah. By Captain R. Burton Vol. 3. Longman.

A Journal of a Tour in unsettled Parts of North America in 1796 and 1797. By the late Francis Baily. Edited by Augustus De Morgan, Esq. Baily Brothers.

The Science of Social Opulence. By William Lucas Sargant. Simpkin and Marshall.

The Political Life of Sir Robert Peel. An Analytical Biography. By Thomas Doubleday. 2 vols. Smith and Elder.

Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers. Moxon.

Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, with an Account of her Marriage with H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, afterwards King George IV. By the Hon. Charles Langdale. Bentley.

Memoirs of Ralph Wardlaw, D.D. By the Rev. W. L. Alexander. Black and Co.

A Portion of a Journal kept by Thomas Raikes, Esq., from 1831-1847. Vols. 1 and 2. Longman.

A Selection from the Correspondence of Robert Southey. Vols. 1 and 2. Longman.

The Iliad of Homer faithfully translated into unrhymed English Metre. By F. W. Newman. Walton and Maberly.

Noctes Ambrosianæ. Vol. 3. Blackwood.

The Lump of Gold, and other Poems. By Charles Mackay. Routledge.

The Isles of Loch Awe and other Poems. With Illustrations. By Philip Gilbert Hamerton. W. E. Painter.

Poems. By James Ballantine. Constable.

The Daisy Chain; or, Aspirations. A Family Chronicle. By the Author of "The Heir of Redclyffe." J. W. Parker and Son.

After Dark. By Wilkie Collins. 3 vols. Smith and Elder.

Amberhill. 2 vols. Smith and Elder.

Clara; or, Slave-life in Europe. With a Preface by Sir A. Alison. 3 vols. Bentley.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY LEVEY, ROBSON, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street and Fetter Lane.